2015 Nebraska Volleyball National Title Edition

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2015 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship

First/Second Rounds December 3-4 or December 4-5 | **Regionals** December 11-12 | **Semifinals** December 17 | **Championship** December 19 | **Semifinals** December 17 | **Regionals** December 11-12 | **First/Second Rounds** December 3-4 or December 4-5

1 *Southern California (30-2) — 10:30 p.m. — Cleveland St. (26-6) — Southern California 3-1
Northern Ariz. (28-4) — 8 p.m. — San Diego (21-9) — San Diego 3-0
10 p.m. — Southern California 3-0
**North Carolina (20-9) — 6:30 p.m. — UNCW (24-7) — North Carolina 3-0
Coastal Caro. (25-4) — 4:30 p.m. — 16 Creighton (25-8) — Creighton 3-1
5 p.m. — Creighton 3-1
11 p.m. — Southern California 3-1
9 *Kansas (26-2) — 7:30 p.m. — Furman (21-8) — Kansas 3-0
Missouri St. (24-10) — 5 p.m. — Missouri (26-5) — Missouri 3-1
7:30 p.m. — Kansas 3-0
Loyola Marymount (22-8) — 7:30 p.m. — Colorado St. (26-3) — Loyola Marymount 3-1
New Mexico St. (28-5) — 10 p.m. — 8 *Stanford (22-6) — Stanford 3-0
10 p.m. — Loyola Marymount 3-0
8:30 p.m. — Kansas 3-1
Kansas 3-2
5 **Washington (28-2) — 10:30 p.m. — Denver (27-7) — Washington 3-0
Michigan St. (18-13) — 8 p.m. — Arkansas St. (28-1) — Michigan St. 3-0
10 p.m. — Washington 3-1
Kentucky (21-9) — 4:30 p.m. — American (27-6) — American 3-0
Robert Morris (19-12) — 7 p.m. — 12 **Ohio St. (23-9) — Ohio St. 3-0
5:30 p.m. — Ohio St. 3-0
7:30 p.m. — Washington 3-2
13 **BYU (26-3) — 9 p.m. — Ohio (25-7) — BYU 3-1
Arizona (19-13) — 7 p.m. — Western Ky. (31-3) — Western Ky. 3-0
9 p.m. — BYU 3-0
Wichita St. (26-8) — 5:30 p.m. — Kansas St. (17-11) — Wichita St. 3-1
Harvard (15-10) — 8 p.m. — 4 **Nebraska (26-4) — Nebraska 3-1
8 p.m. — Nebraska 3-0
5 p.m. — Nebraska 3-0
Nebraska 3-1

Jenny Craig Pavilion, San Diego
Semifinal 1 Dec. 11: 8:30 p.m. ET/ESPN3
Semifinal 2 Dec. 11: 11 p.m. ET/ESPNU/WatchESPN
Regional Final Dec. 12: 11:30 p.m. ET/ESPNU/WatchESPN

Memorial Coliseum, Lexington, Kentucky
Semifinal 1 Dec. 11: 5 p.m. ET/ESPN3
Semifinal 2 Dec. 11: 7:30 p.m. ET/ESPN3
Regional Final Dec. 12: 4 p.m. ET/ESPNU/WatchESPN

Century Link Center
Omaha, Nebraska
9:30 p.m.
LIVE ESPN2/WatchESPN

Nebraska 3-1

Nebraska 3-0

NATIONAL CHAMPION

Century Link Center
Omaha, Nebraska
7:30 p.m.
LIVE ESPN2/WatchESPN

Texas 3-1

Texas 3-2

Minnesota 3-1

Century Link Center
Omaha, Nebraska
7 p.m.
LIVE ESPN2/WatchESPN

Texas 3-1 — 8 p.m. — UCLA 3-2
Florida 3-2 — 5:30 p.m. — Wisconsin 3-0
Hawaii 3-0 — 8:30 p.m. — Hawaii 3-0
Minnesota 3-0 — 6 p.m. — Minnesota 3-0

Gregory Gym, Austin, Texas
Semifinal 1 Dec. 11: 5:30 p.m. ET/ESPN3
Semifinal 2 Dec. 11: 8 p.m. ET/ESPN3
Regional Final Dec. 12: 9 p.m. ET/ESPNU/WatchESPN

Wells Fargo Arena, Des Moines, Iowa
Semifinal 1 Dec. 11: 6 p.m. ET/ESPN3
Semifinal 2 Dec. 11: 8:30 p.m. ET/ESPN3
Regional Final Dec. 12: 6:30 p.m. ET/ESPNU/WatchESPN

Texas 3-0 — 7 p.m. — Purdue 3-1
Michigan 3-1 — 10 p.m. — UCLA 3-0
Florida 3-0 — 7 p.m. — Florida 3-1
Florida St. 3-0 — Iowa St. 3-0 — 9 p.m. — Wisconsin 3-1
Penn St. 3-0 — 7:30 p.m. — Dayton 3-1
Hawaii 3-2 — 7:30 p.m. — Texas A&M 3-0
Louisville 3-1 — 7 p.m. — Illinois 3-0
Marquette 3-2 — 7:30 p.m. — Minnesota 3-0

*Texas (25-2) — 8 p.m. — Fairfield (21-9) — 3
SMU (27-5) — 5:30 p.m. — Purdue (22-9)
Michigan (19-12) — 8:30 p.m. — Santa Clara (22-8)
Lipscomb (23-8) — 11 p.m. — **UCLA (23-7) — 14
*Florida (22-6) — 7 p.m. — New Hampshire (21-8) — 11
Arizona St. (19-12) — 4:30 p.m. — Florida St. (24-7)
Iowa St. (18-10) — 6 p.m. — Miami (FL) (21-9)
Oregon (16-13) — 8:30 p.m. — *Wisconsin (24-6) — 6
**Penn St. (26-5) — 7:30 p.m. — Howard (18-13) — 7
Dayton (26-5) — 5 p.m. — Villanova (25-8)
Hawaii (26-1) — 5:30 p.m. — TCU (19-9)
A&M-Corpus Christi (31-4) — 7:30 p.m. — **Texas A&M (23-6) — 10
**Louisville (24-6) — 7 p.m. — Belmont (17-14) — 15
Southern Ill. (23-9) — 5 p.m. — Illinois (19-12)
Marquette (21-11) — 5:30 p.m. — UNI (19-14)
Jackson St. (15-21) — 7:30 p.m. — **Minnesota (26-4) — 2

* Host Institution Thursday/Friday, December 3-4
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From the Editor

BY DARREN IVY
twitter.com/Darrenlvy1

HUSKERS TAKE OUT FRUSTRATIONS ON LONGHORNS

Nebraska sweeps Texas to earn fourth NCAA championship

THINGS WERE HAPPY IN HUSKERVILLE AT THE START OF THE NEW YEAR FOLLOWING THE VOLLEYBALL TEAM'S FOURTH NATIONAL TITLE AND THE FOOTBALL TEAM'S VICTORY OVER UCLA IN THE FOSTER FARMS BOWL.

Among the then-NCAA record crowd of 17,551 fans in attendance for the NCAA Volleyball Semifinals at the CenturyLink Center in Omaha on Dec. 17 were my other four family members.

As soon as Nebraska defeated No. 1 Washington in the Louisville Regional Final, I got on Ticketmaster and purchased four tickets for my wife and three daughters so they too could experience a Final Four.

Even then, the only tickets left were way up in the second level balcony, but they didn't seem to mind as the semifinal match was more about the experience and atmosphere than the actual seats.

Although, I am sure my wife would much rather have traded with me at times for my second row seat down on the floor near the action.

Especially as the night got later with our 4-year-old.

Still, everyone should have the opportunity to experience a Final Four, regardless of the sport.

I was talking with my wife before the game, and this was the first such experience I have had in my professional career.

About the only thing that tops it would be the 1998 Orange Bowl, which happened to be Tom Osborne's final game as NU's coach, Peyton Manning's last game as Tennessee's quarterback, and it turned out to result in a share of the national title with Michigan.

To start the evening, we ate nearby and then hit the souvenir stand – the NCAA makes sure that is right inside the door. It obviously isn't their first rodeo.

Each of the girls got NCAA Tournament shirts as did my wife.

My only souvenir was the program I got and the memories of watching as Nebraska volleyball continued its dominance of the Jayhawks, having still never lost against its former Big Eight and Big 12 foe.

Ever.

NU is now 87-0-1 all-time vs. Kansas.

Up next was Big Bad Texas, which had beaten Big Red already once this season back on Sept. 4 in five sets.

And, actually, the last four times before that, including several season-ending losses in the NCAA Tournament.

Somehow 10 more people managed to squeeze into the CenturyLink Center on Dec. 19 to establish another new attendance mark.

My family watched from the Railyard in Lincoln.

Most were not disappointed as freshman Mikaela Foecke took over early for the Huskers and helped NU sweep Texas for the national title.

It was exactly 20 years to the date of NU's first title, which came came over Texas back in 1995 under Coach Terry Pettit. NU now leads the all-time series 31-22

Selfishly, I wish the NCAA would just make Omaha the permenant home of the NCAA Volleyball Final Four, like the TD Ameritrade Park across the street is to the College World Series. Nebraska won't make it every year but Nebraska fans would still show up and come close to filling the CenturyLink Center, at least more so than any other place who hosts it.

And during those years when the Huskers do make the Final Four, it would be a bonus like this year.

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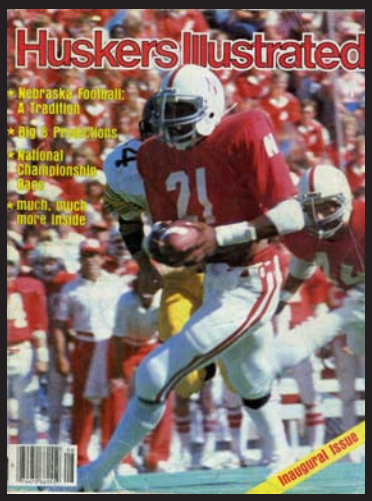

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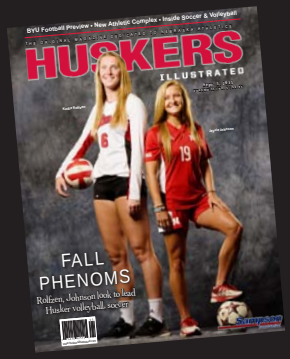

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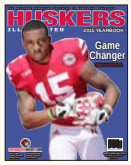

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The next Huskers Illustrated edition, featuring the 2016 football recruiting class will mail on Feb. 16.

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Nebraska committed to the run offensively against UCLA and had success with it. Is that a sign of things to come in 2016 from Coach Mike and company?

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VOLLEYBALL WINS FOURTH NATIONAL TITLE
BY BOB HAMAR
The Nebraska volleyball team came on at the end of the 2015 season and won its final 16 matches in a row, including a sweep of Texas in the NCAA final.

2016 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME	TV/SCORE
APRIL 16	RED-WHITE SPRING GAME	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
SEPT. 3	FRESNO STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
SEPT. 10	WYOMING	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
SEPT. 17	OREGON	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
SEPT. 24	@NORTHWESTERN	EVANSTON, ILLINOIS	TBA	TBA
OCT. 1	ILLINOIS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
OCT. 15	@INDIANA	BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA	TBA	TBA
OCT. 22	PURDUE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
OCT. 29	@WISCONSIN	MADISON, WISCONSIN	TBA	TBA
NOV. 5	@OHIO STATE	COLUMBUS, OHIO	TBA	TBA
NOV. 12	MINNESOTA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
NOV. 19	MARYLAND	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
NOV. 25	@IOWA	IOWA CITY, IOWA	TBA	TBA

ALL GAMES ARE CST

ON THE COVER

Nebraska volleyball players hoist up the NCAA Championship trophy after defeating Texas in the finals at the CenturyLink Center in Omaha. It was the third national championship for Nebraska head coach John Cook and the Cornhuskers' first national championship in volleyball since 2006.

PHOTO BY JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Story by Bob Hamar • Photos by Mitch Otto & Joe Mixan

Flash back to November of 2006. John Cook's Nebraska volleyball team had just had its 23-match winning streak snapped at Colorado. At his Monday press conference, Cook was asked if there was anything good about a loss.

No, he said. "I hate to lose."

The Huskers refocused, won 10 straight matches and went all the way to the national title, beating Stanford in the championship match at what was then called the Qwest Center in Omaha.

Now it's 2015. On the weekend of Oct. 23-24, the Huskers dropped back-to-back home matches to Minnesota and Wisconsin at the Devaney Center. The losses dropped the Huskers to 16-4 on the year, and the season seemed to be in jeopardy.

"It's hard to be on top. It's hard to be good," Cook said the Monday following those losses. "It's hard to wear 'Nebraska.' But that's part of it. When you come to this program you have to be able to handle it."

See TITLE on Pg. 8

Semifinal

Dec. 17 at CenturyLink Center

Nebraska (31-4) – 25 25 20 25

Kansas (30-3) – 20 21 25 16

Championship

Dec. 19 at CenturyLink Center

Nebraska (32-4) – 25 25 25

Texas (30-3) – 23 23 21

2015 Nebraska Volleyball Roster

No.	Name	Position	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
2	Mikaela Foecke	MB/OH	6-3	Fr.	West Point, Iowa (Holy Trinity Catholic)
3	Kelly Hunter	Setter	5-11	So.	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista South)
4	Justine Wong-Orantes	Libero	5-11	Jr.	Cypress, Calif. (Los Alamitos)
5	Amber Rolfzen	Outside Hitter	5-11	Jr.	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista South)
6	Kadie Rolfzen	Outside Hitter	5-11	Jr.	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista South)
7	Sydney Townsend	Libero	5-11	So.	Lincoln, Neb. (Pius X)
8	Brooke Smith	Setter	5-11	Fr.	Weatherford, Texas (Azle)
9	Cecilia Hall	Middle Blocker	5-11	Sr.	Linkoping, Sweden (Allebergsgymnasiet)
10	Alicia Ostrander	Outside Hitter	5-11	Sr.	Gordon, Neb. (Gordon-Rushville)
11	Kenzie Maloney	DS/Libero	5-11	Fr.	Louisville, Ky. (Assumption)
13	Briana Holman	Middle Blocker	5-11	Jr.	DeSoto, Texas (LSU) (Cedar Hill)
14	Kelsey Fien	Outside Hitter	5-11	Sr.	Bakersfield, Calif. (Frontier)
17	Annika Albrecht	Outside Hitter	5-11	So.	North Aurora, Ill. (Home Schooled)
20	Meghan Haggerty	Middle Blocker	5-11	Sr.	Glen Ellyn, Ill. (Benet Academy)
22	Tiani Reeves	MB/OH	5-11	Fr.	Gothenburg, Neb. (Gothenburg)
27	Olivia Boender	Outside Hitter	5-11	RFr.	Waverly, Neb. (Waverly)

From **TITLE** on Pg. 6

The Huskers handled it quite well from there on with 16-straight victories, including a 3-0 sweep of Texas in the championship match Dec. 19 at CenturyLink Center in Omaha. It was the fourth national title for the program and third for Cook, who also won in his first season as head coach in 2000.

When asked how this team compared for improvement during the season, Cook didn't hesitate.

He said this year's team improved more than any he had ever had.

"And I'm not sure at the beginning of the year I thought we'd win a national championship," Cook said.

The Huskers followed with some big wins, including victories at Illinois, at Purdue and at Michigan on their way to a 9-1 road record in Big Ten play.

"They just kept going like this," Cook said, indicating an uphill plane. "And they played a great match against Washington (in the regional final). Kansas (in the national semifinal) we weren't super sharp. Kansas had a lot to do with that."

And then came Texas, a team that had beaten the Huskers four-straight times, for the national title and the Huskers put together their best match of the season.

Cook had to make numerous changes to the team. It all started in the off season when he approached Amber Rolfzen about moving from right side to middle blocker. Rolfzen resisted time after time, but finally gave it a shot. She ended up a second-team All-American.

Freshman Mikaela Foecke started the year at right side. It wasn't long before Cook decided that wasn't working, so he moved her to the left where he thought she'd be more comfortable. She was named MVP of the Final Four and national freshman of the year.

See **TITLE** on Pg. 10

Nebraska head coach John Cook holds up the National Championship trophy after NU defeated Texas.

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University Bookstore Helps Celebrate Big Volleyball Victory

University Bookstore Director Jeni Fuchs prides herself on being an active member of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln community.

While she joined the University Bookstore only a year ago, her roots extend back much further as a resident of Lincoln for more than 20 years and a '98 alumna of UNL.

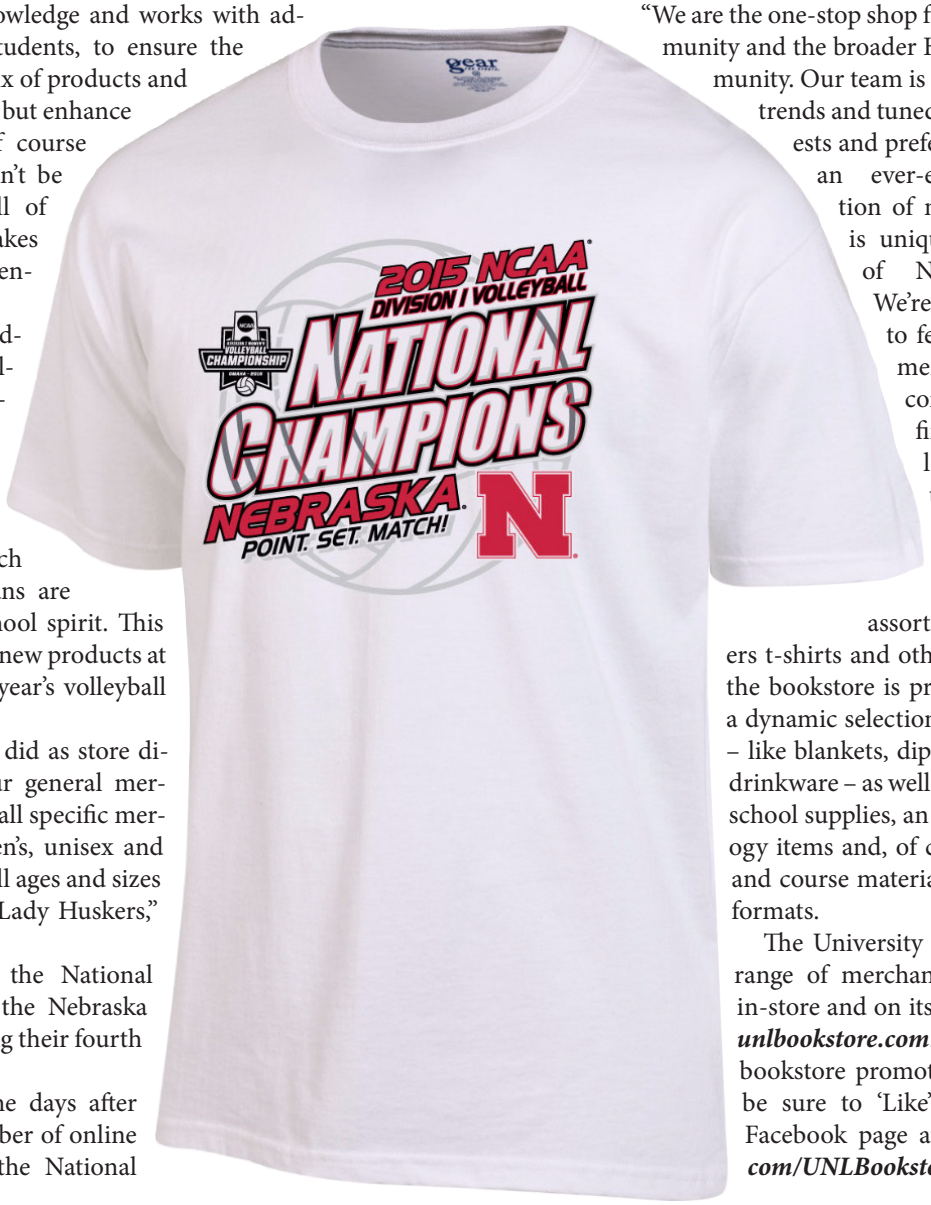
Fuchs leverages local knowledge and works with administration, faculty and students, to ensure the bookstore offers the right mix of products and services to not only support, but enhance the campus experience. Of course the UNL experience wouldn't be complete without the thrill of game day – and Fuchs makes sure the bookstore plays a central role in this excitement.

Fuchs, a season ticket holder for UNL football and volleyball, shares in the campus-wide passion for everything Cornhuskers. She attends games throughout the season to cheer on her home team as well as to research what the teams and the fans are wearing to display their school spirit. This research then translates into new products at the bookstore, such as this year's volleyball t-shirt collection.

"One of the first things I did as store director was partner with our general merchandise team to get volleyball specific merchandise. We created women's, unisex and girls t-shirts to help fans of all ages and sizes show their support for the Lady Huskers," said Fuchs.

T-shirt options include the National Champions shirt worn by the Nebraska volleyball team upon winning their fourth national title on Dec. 19.

According to Fuchs, "The days after the win we saw quite a number of online orders come through for the National Champions shirt. Everyone is excited at the bookstore and all around campus."



The new volleyball t-shirts and the game day spirit all connect back to the University Bookstore's central mission to support student achievements and provide a hassle-free shopping experience for customers.

"We are the one-stop shop for the UNL community and the broader Huskers fan community. Our team is tracking national trends and tuned in to local interests and preferences to deliver an ever-evolving collection of merchandise that is unique to University of Nebraska-Lincoln. We're also always open to feedback so if any member of the UNL community can't find what they're looking for – let us know," said Fuchs.

In addition to the unique assortment of Huskers t-shirts and other apparel items, the bookstore is proud to also offer a dynamic selection of Huskers gifts – like blankets, diploma frames and drinkware – as well as UNL-branded school supplies, an array of technology items and, of course, textbooks and course materials in a variety of formats.

The University Bookstore's wide range of merchandise is available in-store and on its website at ***www.unlbookstore.com***. For the latest on bookstore promotions and events, be sure to 'Like' the bookstore's Facebook page at ***www.facebook.com/UNLBookstore***.

Kelsey Fien cuts down the net as Kelly Hunter holds the trophy following the Texas match.

From **TITLE** on Pg. 8

Moving Foecke to the left meant All-American Kadie Rolfzen had to move to the right. The Huskers' best all-around player handled the transition seamlessly. She once again led the team in kills and was named a first-team All-American.

The gutsiest move may have taken place in 2014 when Cook persuaded setter Kelly Hunter to redshirt and turned the team over to senior Mary Pollmiller.

"I thought it was one of the way she handled it was one of the greatest examples of a player trusting a decision, a very tough decision, because I think Kelly felt like she could have played last year," Cook said. "But we felt that was best for the program and we did it. She never batted an eye and she worked hard."

The whole team worked hard and in the end maxed out its potential, just like the 2006 national championship team and the 2008 team that lost in the semifinals to Penn State.

"I think you got to say that, in my opinion, this team has really maxed themselves out," Cook said. "I can't remember when we have had a bad practice. I got to kick them out of the gym and they love to be in the weight room and all that stuff. They have really embraced the journey, they have worked really hard and they have improved."

Did You Know?

■ Nebraska's victory over Texas occurred exactly 20 years to the date that the Huskers defeated the Longhorns 3-1 for their first ever volleyball championship in 1995.

Nebraska's Path To A National Championship

Nebraska Invite at Devaney Center			
Aug. 28	Tulsa	W, 3-0	(1-0)
Aug. 29	Grand Canyon	W, 3-0	(2-0)
Aug. 29	Pittsburgh	W, 3-1	(3-0)
Vertical Challenge at Austin, Texas			
Sept. 4	Texas	L, 3-2	(3-1)
Sept. 5	Oregon	W, 3-2	(4-1)
Ameritas Challenge at Devaney Center			
Sept. 11	UC Davis	W, 3-0	(5-1)
Sept. 12	USF	W, 3-0	(6-1)
Sept. 12	Georgia Tech	W, 3-0	(7-1)
Sept. 15	at Creighton	W, 3-0	(8-1)
Sept. 19	at Iowa State	W, 3-1	(9-1)
Sept. 23	at Iowa	W, 3-0	(10-1)
Sept. 26	Iowa	W, 3-0	(11-1)
Oct. 2	at Penn State	W, 3-2	(12-1)
Oct. 3	at Ohio State	L, 3-2	(12-2)
Oct. 7	Mich. State	W, 3-1	(13-2)
Oct. 10	Michigan	W, 3-1	(14-2)
Oct. 16	at Northwestern	W, 3-0	(15-2)
Oct. 17	at Illinois	W, 3-0	(16-2)
Oct. 23	Minnesota	L, 3-1	(16-3)
Oct. 24	Wisconsin	L, 3-1	(16-4)
Oct. 30	Rutgers	W, 3-0	(17-4)
Oct. 31	Maryland	W, 3-0	(18-4)
Nov. 4	at Purdue	W, 3-0	(19-4)
Nov. 7	at Indiana	W, 3-0	(20-4)
Nov. 11	at Mich. State	W, 3-2	(21-4)
Nov. 14	at Maryland	W, 3-1	(22-4)
Nov. 18	Indiana	W, 3-0	(23-4)
Nov. 21	at Michigan	W, 3-1	(24-4)
Nov. 25	Illinois	W, 3-0	(25-4)
Nov. 28	Penn State	W, 3-0	(26-4)
NCAA 1st & 2nd Rds at Devaney Center			
Dec. 4	Harvard	W, 3-1	(27-4)
Dec. 5	Wichita State	W, 3-0	(28-4)
NCAA Regionals at Lexington, Ky.			
Dec. 11	BYU	W, 3-0	(29-4)
Dec. 12	Washington	W, 3-1	(30-4)
NCAA Final Four at Omaha			
Dec. 17	Kansas	W, 3-1	(31-4)
Dec. 19	Texas	W, 3-0	(32-4)

NEBRASKA VOLLEYBALL NOTEBOOK

Compiled by Bob Hamar • Photo by Mitch Otto

HUSKERS ENJOYING TITLE FOR NOW

Nebraska coach John Cook wasn't ready to talk about next season immediately after beating Texas in the championship match.

But the Huskers will be ranked No. 1 in the preseason polls not just because of the national title, but because of all the talent returning for 2016.

Kadie Rolfzen, a first-team All-American, and twin sister Amber, a second-team All-American, will be seniors. Setter Kelly Hunter will be back for her junior season of eligibility. National freshman of the year Mikaela Foecke will be a year older.

Key backrow players like libero Justine Wong-Orantes and Kenzie Maloney return and middle blocker Briana Holman, a first-team All-American at LSU who sat out this season as a transfer, will be eligible.

The Huskers lose middle blockers Cecilia Hall, who came up big in the Final Four, and Meghan Hagerty, who battled injuries throughout the 2015 season.

They also lose Alicia Ostrander, a captain who played sparingly this season, as well as outside hitter Kelsey Fien.

Cook said the contributions of the seniors went way beyond what they did on the court.

"We're going to lose four really great seniors," Cook said. "Two of them had very important roles in practice and off the court in Meghan and Alicia. And again, if you could have seen our last match against Penn State when I put Alicia in, the crowd went nuts with the 'Big O' and it shows you how much respect she has."

Defensive specialist Kenzie Maloney makes a dig against Kansas.

FOECKE PLAYS LIKE VETERAN

The 6-foot-3 Foecke was a key player for the Huskers in the championship match. She finished with 19 kills, including eight in each of the first two sets when she was matched up at the net with 5-7 Texas setter Nicole Dalton.

"We had a pretty good matchup up front for the first two games," Cook said. "Texas rotated and tried to get (Yaasmeen Bedart-Ghani) against her so they changed that matchup in game three. It worked a little bit and Mikaela slowed down, but she was on fire the first two games. Her and Kelly (Hunter) were in a very good rhythm.""

Texas coach Jerritt Elliott said his team is height-challenged with a 5-7 setter and a 5-9 outside hitter in senior Amy Neal, even though she had 10 kills for the match.

"Each team has their systems and routes they run," Elliott said. "We have the tendencies in terms of what we want to be able to stop.

"...If you're in system 75 percent of the time, you're going to be tough to stop."

PERFECT PASSING

The Huskers were in rhythm throughout the championship match because the passers were getting the ball right to Hunter. Cook joked that he told the passers they had to get the ball right to Hunter because her footwork isn't very good.

In any event, the Huskers – led by Wong-Orantes – were right on target with their passing. The Huskers struggled with passing in 2014 and that led to a 23-10 record and a loss to BYU in a regional final.

"Those guys did a great job," Cook said of this year's passers. "They have all year. About the last game I can remember is against Kansas we broke down a little bit in game three. But we have been really solid all year in that area."

CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

Cook stressed "championship points" all season in practice. The Huskers struggled late in sets in 2014, but with just a couple of exceptions were good in that area this season.

The Huskers were exceptionally good against Texas, winning the first two games by 25-23 scores.

The champions sign during Kansas match was some foreshadowing of what was to come for NU. Mikaela Foecke was named Most Valuable Player of the Final Four.

Huskers win 77th-conscutive match over Kansas to reach final

Story by NU Media Relations • Photos by Mitch Otto & Joe Mixan

The fourth-seeded Nebraska volleyball team used a strong finish to push its way past No. 9 Kansas, punching its ticket to the NCAA Championship match. Nebraska won the final seven rallies of the match to defeat the Jayhawks in front of 17,551 fans at the CenturyLink Center, which at the time was the largest volleyball crowd in NCAA history.

The Huskers led for all but six rallies in the first two sets, taking a 2-0 lead into the locker room following a 25-20 victory in set one and a 25-21 win in set two. The Jayhawks used six blocks to take the third set, 25-20. In the decisive fourth set, Kansas pulled within 18-16 on the strength of a 4-0 run, only to see Nebraska win the final seven rallies to advance to their seventh NCAA final.

Kadie Rolfzen led Nebraska with 14 kills on .343 hitting, and she added five digs and four blocks. Mikaela Foecke tallied 12 kills and Cecilia Hall had 10 kills and a match-high seven blocks. Justine Wong-Orantes totaled 17 digs, while Kelly Hunter dished out 47 assists for a Husker offense that had fewer kills than KU, but out-hit the Jayhawks, .207 to .159. Kansas' Kelsie Payne led all attackers with 22 kills, and she hit a blistering .576.

Set one: Strong serving – including a trio of aces, two from Kelly Hunter – helped Nebraska take a 15-12 lead at the media timeout. Kansas won the next two points and the teams traded sideouts for the next nine rallies before three consecutive points gave the Huskers a 22-18 lead and forced a KU timeout. Nebraska earned its first set point at 24-20 and took the set on Kansas' fifth attack error. Nebraska hit .308 in the opening set with three aces. The Jayhawks hit .286 and committed four service errors. Kelsie Payne and Tayler Soucie each had five kills for KU, while Cecilia Hall had four kills on four swings for NU.

Did You Know?

- Nebraska improved to 87-0-1 all-time against Kansas
- NU's Kadie Rolfzen led NU with 14 kills and had at least 10 kills in each of NU's first five NCAA Tournament matches.
- NU made its 12th NCAA Semifinals appearance, a total which ties Penn State and UCLA for second all-time. Nebraska improved to 10-8 all-time in the NCAA Semifinals.

Set two: Set two featured two lead changes and four ties in the first 15 rallies before consecutive hitting errors helped Nebraska score three straight points and take an 11-7 lead. More strong serving helped the Huskers stretch the lead to 18-12, when Kansas called its second timeout. Nebraska spent its first timeout after the Jayhawks closed to within five at 23-18. A Kadie Rolfzen quickly gave the Huskers their first set point, but Kansas won the next three rallies to force a second Husker timeout at 24-21. Kadie Rolfzen again registered a kill following the timeout to give Nebraska a 2-0 lead. Rolfzen had five kills on eight error-free swings in the second set. The Huskers hit .294 in the second set and held Kansas to a .191 attack percentage, as the Jayhawks committed eight hitting errors in the set, including a pair of Nebraska blocks.

Set three: Kansas jumped out to a quick lead in set three before Nebraska won four straight rallies to take a 7-5 lead. The Jayhawks came back with three straight points to take a 13-11 advantage and Kansas led 15-13 at the media timeout. KU stretched its lead to three to force a Nebraska timeout at 19-16. An Anna Church ace forced a second Husker timeout after Kansas took its first four-point lead of the match, 22-18. Ainise Havili scored on a setter dump out of the break and Kansas earned its first set point at 24-20. KU closed out the set with a block on the next rally. The Jayhawks

See **KANSAS** on Pg. 14

Volleyball Grows in the State of Nebraska

The Volleyball Academy (TVA) began in 2006 with the sole purpose of helping anyone (youth and adult) who wanted to learn and improve their game.

Director Deb Grafentin and Assistant Director Krista Barr are the founders and co-owners of TVA. They started by hosting camps and giving lessons. As the needs of their customers expanded so did the programs being offered.

"Having the opportunity to watch the Final Four in our back yard only enhances volleyball in the State of Nebraska. John Cook has sustained the high level of play of Nebraska volleyball and this just encourages more girls to get involved in the game."

"We have a very strong Li'l Digger program (K-4 grade). Just his past year we had over 600 Lil' Diggers in programs that ran January through December. It first started as just 2nd thru 4th graders, until parents asked if their 1stgrader could come, so we opened it to K-4," Grafentin said.

The leagues that TVA puts on are now entering their 7th year. They currently run a Winter, Spring and Fall league for 3-8th grade. The leagues are set up for all levels of play. There is Developmental, Competitive, and Advanced Competitive, the latter league you must try out for. All other leagues everyone plays, there are no cuts.

"Our company has evolved tremendously over the past 10 years," Grafentin said. "We offer the traditional volleyball camps during the summer and winter break. TVA will even come to your school and run a camp for you. These camps are specifically designed for the needs of that school. We also like to keep the cost low and make it very affordable so all student-athletes can attend."

With the Huskers winning the women's volleyball national championship, it can only help increase the popularity of that sport in the state of Nebraska.

"I have been coaching in the Omaha area since 1982 and have seen volleyball from it's infancy of growth to now being the major girls sport in the nation. Terry Pettit was a huge factor in this start. He instilled in many Nebraska high school coaches, I being one, a sense of sound fundamentals enhanced by the philosophical principles of why we teach what we teach," Grafentin said.

With the popularity of volleyball growing in Nebraska along with the fact that high school players are getting more attention by college programs nationwide, parents see a benefit for their girls to get into the sport at an early age.

"Having the opportunity to watch the Final Four in our back yard only enhances volleyball in the state of Nebraska. John Cook has sustained the high level of play of Nebraska volleyball and this just encourages more girls to get involved in the game. We (TVA) may start programs at kindergarten, but the key factor is that any sport you play must remain fun. At TVA we incorporate fun into all of the learning," Grafentin said.

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From **KANSAS** on Pg. 12

held Nebraska to .078 hitting in the third set while Payne and Janae Hall each had four kills in the set. Kadie Rolfzen had four kills for Nebraska, but the Huskers committed eight attack errors in the third set after totaling eight errors in the first two sets combined.

Set four: Nebraska scored three straight points to break an 8-all tie and take an 11-8 lead in set four. The teams then traded sideouts before a Jayhawk serving error and a Kelsey Fien kill put Nebraska on top 16-12, forcing Kansas to burn its second timeout. The Huskers stuffed the Jayhawks out of the break and Fien added another kill to stretch the lead to 18-12. Following Nebraska's 5-1 run, KU won four straight rallies to pull within 18-16, but the Huskers won the final seven rallies of the match to punch their ticket to the NCAA final. The Huskers had five blocks in the third set to hold Kansas to a .000 attack percentage. Cecilia Hall had four stuffs and two kills in the set.

Clockwise from above: Kadie Rolfzen goes up for an attack against Kansas. Annika Albrecht makes a diving save for Nebraska against the Jayhawks. Nebraska players celebrate match point against Kansas to advance to the championship.

Premier Nebraska 14 Gold Captures National Title

Players and coaches from Omaha's Premier Volleyball club came back from the Big Easy this Summer with a coveted piece of hardware around their necks that few volleyball players ever earn - gold medals. Members of Premier 14 Gold took gold in the 14-and-under National age division, defeating Florida's Gainesville 14 Elite in three sets in the final match for the Championship.

"Winning a national championship is an extremely hard thing to do. To make it to the national tournament, you must qualify at a National Qualifier or Regional and then compete against the best of the best in every single game at nationals."

"This has just been the most incredible experience," said Ashley Martin, Premier 14 Gold's head coach. "These 10 girls worked so hard throughout the season and they're such a special team of young ladies. I couldn't be prouder of them. This is simply the perfect ending to a perfect season."

"Winning a national championship is an extremely hard thing to do," said Rick Welch, Club Director of Premier Volleyball. "To make it to the national tournament, you must qualify at a National Qualifier or Regional and then compete against the best of the best in every single game at nationals. For these girls to continue to play at the highest level game after game in New Orleans and come home with the gold is quite an accomplishment."

On the final day of competition, after already making it to the "Gold" bracket, Premier 14 Gold defeated Oklahoma's OP2 14 Smack in the quarterfinals, Kansas' KC Power 141 in the semis and then Gainesville Elite in the championship game by a score of 20-25, 25-18 and 15-12. Earlier in the tournament, 14 Gold defeated teams from Texas, Ohio, Florida, New York and several other states on the way to the title.

Premier Nebraska broke a Great Plains Region and club record by qualifying 12 teams to nationals, Premier 18 Gold, 18 Black, 17 Gold, 16 Gold, 15 Gold, 15 Black, 14 Gold, 14 Black, 13 Gold, 13 Black, 12 Gold, 12 Black and 11 Gold. That ranked 4th in number of teams qualified with only A5 (Atlanta), TAV (Texas) and Mad Frog (Texas) qualifying more.

A total of about 13,000 players competed in the 2015 USA Girls' Junior National Championship in June, with a record number of college coaches in attendance to scout and recruit them. Just under 500 coaches were in New Orleans this year, including coaches from Creighton University, UNL and University of Nebraska – Omaha.

The team was coached by Ashley and Tadd Martin and Kirstine "Kiki" Linebaugh. Premier Nebraska 14 Gold athletes: Jaiden Centeno (Millard West), Breanna Green (Millard West), Bailey Hanus (Omaha Marian), Jessica Hendrix (Papillion South), Lauren Maciejewski, Carly Renken (Millard West), Megan Skovsende, Ashley Straub (Omaha Marian), Bailey Wilson (Millard West) and Hailey Zuroske (Omaha Marian).

John Cook and Cecilia Hall share a happy moment after the championship sweep of Texas.

Foecke delivers Huskers over Texas for fourth national title

Story by NU Media Relations • Photos by Mitch Otto & Joe Mixan

The Nebraska volleyball team won its fourth national title on Dec. 19 sweeping the Texas Longhorns at the CenturyLink Center in Omaha.

Kelsey Fien's 22nd swing of the night tooled the Texas block and set off a raucous celebration in front of an NCAA-record crowd of 17,561 inside the CenturyLink Center, most of whom were wearing red.

The Huskers won their first national title since taking the crown in 2006, when Omaha hosted the NCAA Championships for the first time. Nebraska head coach John Cook won his third national title since taking over for the legendary Terry Pettit in 2000.

Nebraska ended its championship season with a 16-match winning streak to finish the year with a 32-4 record. The Huskers had to work for their fourth national title on Saturday, 20 years after topping Texas, 3-1, for their first NCAA Championship in 1995. The first set was tied at 23 before Nebraska won the final two rallies to earn a 25-23 win. In set two, Nebraska led 24-23 before winning the final rally. The Huskers took set three by a 25-21 margin, winning the title on their third match point.

Freshman Mikaela Foecke, the tournament's Most Oustanding Player, had a match-high 19 kills for the Huskers and hit .385. Junior Amber Rolfzen added 10 kills on 16 error-free swings, while also contributing four blocks. Nebraska hit .311 on the match while limiting Texas to a .215 attack percentage. Sophomore setter Kelly Hunter dished out 42 assists, while junior libero Justine Wong-Orantes tallied a match-high 17 digs.

Yasmeen Bedart-Ghani and Paulina Cerame had 11 kills apiece to pace the Longhorns, who finished their season with a 30-3 record.

Set one: Texas maintained an early edge and went up 7-5 on a service ace by Collins. But a kill by Fien and Hall on the slide tied it up 7-7. Ogbogu regained the lead for Texas by killing an overpass, and she then combined with Bedart-Ghani on a block to make it 9-7 Texas. But the Huskers came back to tie it 10-10 on a Kadie Rolfzen and Hall block. Foecke gave the Huskers their first lead of the set, 11-10, with a smash off the block on the left side. Texas went back in front, 12-11, after a timeout. But Foecke and Amber Rolfzen swung Nebraska back into the lead, as Foecke's fifth kill made it 15-13

See **TEXAS** on Pg. 18

All-Tournament Team

Mikaela Foecke	OH	Nebraska
Yasmeen Bedart-Ghani	OH	Texas
Amber Rolfzen	MB	Nebraska
Amy Neal	OH	Texas
Justine Wong-Orantes	L	Nebraska
Kelly Hunter	S	Nebraska
Kelsie Payne	RS	Kansas

Most Outstanding Performer

Mikaela Foecke, Nebraska

River City Juniors TEACH Volleyball

When deciding on which volleyball club a young player should belong to, you first have to study up on what kind of history each club has had with its players.

There is plenty to find on the River City Juniors, as they were established in 1987 and are entering their 29th season.

Deb Grafentin, the Director of River City Juniors, has 38 years of volleyball coaching experience in college, high school, and club.

The River City Juniors mission is to **TEACH** all phases of the game of volleyball, starting with sound fundamentals and building to team aspects.

They utilize practice and competition opportunities to enhance and develop each player's skills. Considered by many coaches in college and high school, River City Juniors is one of the top teaching and training clubs in the Midwest.

It is important at River City to train for success through fun and hard work. Players are challenged to reach higher milestones both individually and as a team.

"We are like a family and we believe in each other," Grafentin said. "A factor in our coaching style is to let each player know they are a valued individual. Each player has a different role on the team, but each role is valuable to the success of the team and to our club."

"We are like a family and we believe in each other. A factor in our coaching style is to let each player know they are a valued individual. Each player has a different role on the team, but each role is valuable to the success of the team and to our club."

That type of individual attention and the way it is taught gives each player a great foundation on future success in all avenues of life.

One of the "fun" factors at River City is their Big Sis-Little Sis program, where a 15-18 year old is matched with an 11-14 year old for the year.

"We have several Big Sis-Little Sis events where the "sisters" pair up and we do all sorts of crazy fun games. Some volleyball related, but many not. It's just about enjoying being with everyone in the club and having a great time," Grafentin said.

After the River City players graduate and move on to college, their success stands out in numerous ways. In terms of continuing to play, they have gone on to all levels of collegiate play, to playing overseas professionally, and even the Olympic team. Many give back to the sport and continue to coach.

"Currently there are dozens of River City alum coaching college, high school, and club teams. Yet, over these past 29 years it is well into the hundreds," Grafentin said.

River City Juniors is much more than just volleyball, the lessons learned go way beyond the sport.

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- *Competed in 28 National tournaments*
- *National Champions (1), Nat'l Runner-up (2), 3rd Place (4), 5th place (3), other Top Ten (3)*
- *Noted nationally for excellent teaching, training and competitive level*

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From **TEXAS** on Pg. 16

Huskers. Another Fien kill gave Nebraska an 18-16 edge, and Foecke put the Huskers up by three, 20-17, forcing Texas' second timeout. Texas pulled within one, 21-20, but served wide after a Husker timeout. The Longhorns tied it, 22-22, on a Prieto Cerame kill, but Foecke connected again on the next rally for a 23-22 lead. Prieto Cerame answered, but Amber Rolfzen gave set point to the Huskers with a kill on the right side. A Hall and Hunter stuff gave NU set one, 25-23. The Huskers outhit Texas .310 to .220, with Foecke leading the way with eight kills on 12 swings (.667).

Set two: The teams continued to be neck and neck to start off the second set. The Huskers held a 9-7 lead but Texas quickly tied it 9-9 on a kill by Neal and Husker hitting error. The Longhorns claimed an 11-10 lead via a McCage kill, but back-to-back Foecke kills made it 12-11. After Texas tied it 13-13, Amber Rolfzen and Hunter posted up for a block to make it 14-13. Sydney Townsend served an ace to make it 15-13 at the media timeout. Townsend then served up another ace to increase the lead to 16-13, forcing a Texas timeout. The Longhorns came back with three straight to tie it 16-16. After a Husker timeout, a dump kill by Hunter and kill by Fien gave the Huskers an 18-16

See **TEXAS** on Pg. 20

Nebraska players hoist up the championship trophy after defeating Texas.

Nebraska players prepare for introductions before the Texas game.

Premier Nebraska,Courts VBC, Help Athletes Reach Goals

Premier Nebraska Volleyball is a non-profit organization and a registered junior program affiliate of USA Volleyball. The club is directed by Rick Welch and was established in 1997. Over the last 19 years Premier has grown by adding teams as the staff grew. Teamed up with leading edge strength and conditioning specialists that come from over 30 years of proven success and research, Premier pride themselves as one of the most consistent and accredited coaching staff in the state.

"We continue to provide continuing education for our coaches to provide a consistent, quality experience for all our athletes and teams. All of our coaches have USA Volleyball certifications due to the dynamic nature of the sport."

"We continue to provide continuing education for our coaches in order to provide a consistent, quality experience for all our athletes and teams," Welch said. "All of our coaches have USA Volleyball certifications and due to the dynamic nature of the sport and technology, several of our coaches have received their USA Volleyball CAP certification. This is based on sound principles in the areas of skills development, tactical systems, physical training, motor learning, sports psychology, and administration."

Premier Volleyball organizes and manages teams for all USA Volleyball age groups (11u-18u). Premier Volleyball continues to produce competitive teams in all age groups while maintaining a fun learning approach while competing at the highest level.

The Courts VBC is different than other area "club" volleyball programs. The focus is not on forming teams to compete in weekend tournaments. Rather, the focus is on individual all-skills fundamental training, with emphasis on serving and passing. The Courts VBC was created in 2006 by Ron Hoffman, Director of The Courts Volleyball Training Facility. Hoffman has assembled an experienced staff of coaches, including collegiate All-Americans and coaches who have played/coached at various levels of the sport. The primary purpose of The Courts VBC is to offer quality fundamental training to athletes ages 8-14 with limited experience, but who are interested in developing the skills and confidence needed to transition from recreational volleyball to competitive "club" or their school volleyball teams.

Both Premier Volleyball and The Courts VBC operate under one roof, The Courts Volleyball Training Facility, located off I-80 in southwest Omaha. The Courts is a 48,000 square foot, 13-court, indoor volleyball training facility encompassing a wide range of volleyball-specific and athletic performance training programs and activities. The facility provides young athletes with all the tools - competitive volleyball training, camps, clinics, developmental programs, private and small group lessons necessary to grow as a competitive volleyball player. Athletes dream of accomplishing many things, but it takes preparation to achieve their goals. The Courts is a training facility where those volleyball dreams can become a reality! For more information about each program visit www.premiervolleyball.org and www.thecourtsvbc.com.

From **TEXAS** on Pg. 18

lead. Fien then hammered down an overpass and Foecke tacked on her 13th kill, making it 20-17. But Texas gained momentum with a 4-0 run to go up 21-20, with a pair of kills by Neal and one by Bedart-Ghani. The talented freshmen (Foecke and Bedart-Ghani) traded kills before Foecke smacked another, tying it 22-22. Foecke and Amber Rolfzen added a block to make it 23-22 and Foecke continued her onslaught with another kill for set point. The Huskers served long, but then Prieto Cerame hit long as Nebraska went up 2-0 with a 25-23 win.

Set three: Texas opened with a 3-0 lead before a Kadie Rolfzen solo stuff got the Huskers on the board. A service ace by Albrecht cut it to 3-2. A block by Amber and Kadie Rolfzen brought the Huskers to a 4-4 tie. A net violation and two-hit call on the Huskers put Texas back up 7-5. Kills by Fien around a Texas hitting error gave Nebraska an 8-7 lead, which they pushed to 11-9 on another Fien kill, made possible by the strong passing of Kenzie Maloney and Wong-Orantes. Texas rallied to go up 13-12 with a 3-0 run, but Kadie Rolfzen connected on a kill from the right side, knotting the score 13-13. Kadie Rolfzen then won a huge point for the Huskers on a long rally to make it 14-13, as the Huskers' defense put on a show and ignited the crowd. The lead went to 16-13 after Texas hit long and wide on consecutive rallies. After a Texas timeout, Kadie Rolfzen's solo stuff made it 17-13. The Longhorns cut it to 17-16 with three straight kills before NU called timeout. A Kadie Rolfzen tip kill made it 18-16, setting off a 4-0 run. After Texas hit wide, Rolfzen then added an ace to restore the four-point lead, 20-16. The Longhorns hit wide again to make it 21-16. Amber Rolfzen's kill made it 22-18, another kill by Kadie Rolfzen increased the lead to 23-18. Amber Rolfzen gave the Huskers match point, 24-19, with a kill on the slide. The Huskers won it all, 25-21, on a kill by Fien.

Clockwise from left: Nebraska setter Kelly Hunter celebrates a point against Texas. Kadie Rolfzen (6) and Amber Rolfzen go up for the block against Texas. Annika Albrecht (17), Justine Wong-Orantes, Mikael Foeke (2) and Amber Rolfzen (5) celebrate a point against the Longhorns. Cecilia Hall makes an attack against Texas. A fan holds up a sigh for the Rolfzen twins.

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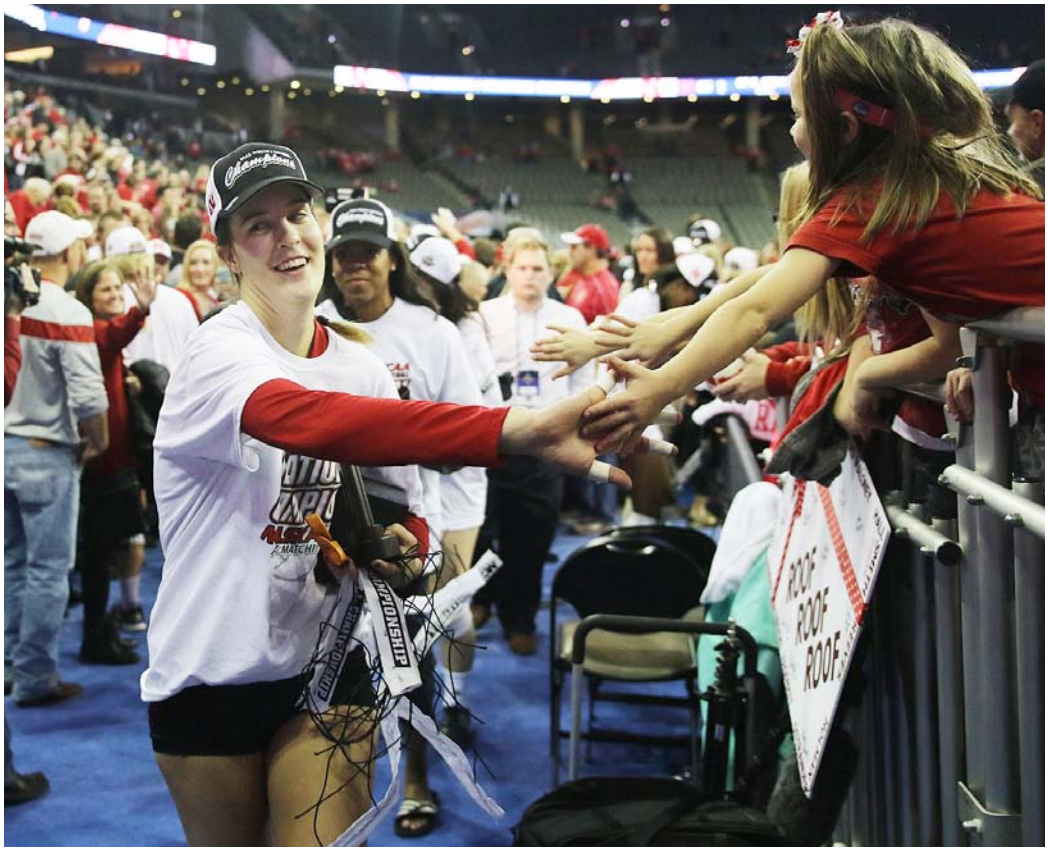
Nebraska
11

Clockwise from left: Kelsey Fien celebrates her match-winning kill against Texas as Kenzie Maloney and Justine Wong-Orantes go crazy. Confetti fell from the sky as NU's players celebrated the school's first national championship since 2006.

Omaha sets record for attendance twice

Clockwise from left. A record number of fans brought plenty of signs for the national-televised championship match. Mario Beltran of Texas and Kreg Helgoth of Clarks pose for a picture after both of their teams won semifinal matches on Dec. 17. Helgoth had a lot more to cheer about in the finals. NU and Texas do battle before a NCAA-record crowd. Nebraska head coach John Cook and assistant Dani Busboom Kelly enjoy a relaxed moment while watching the Texas and Minnesota match. Olivia Boender hugs a teammates after the finals.

Above: Amber Rolfzen goes up for a block against Texas. Below: Kelsey Fien slaps high fives with a fan as she walks off the court at the CenturyLink Center in Omaha following the championship match.



Final Top 25 Rankings

1. Nebraska (32-4)
2. Texas (30-3)
3. Minnesota (30-5)
4. Kansas (30-3)
5. USC (33-3)
6. Washington (31-3)
7. Hawai'i (29-2)
8. Florida (25-7)
9. Penn State (28-6)
10. Wisconsin (26-7)
11. BYU (28-4)
12. UCLA (25-8)
13. Ohio State (25-10)
14. Stanford (23-7)
15. Illinois (21-13)
16. Loyola Marymount (24-9)
17. Purdue (23-10)
18. Texas A&M (24-7)
19. Creighton (27-9)
20. Florida State (25-8)
21. Louisville (25-7)
22. Western Kentucky (32-4)
23. Colorado State (26-4)
24. Michigan (20-13)
25. North Carolina (21-10)

Huskers now part of four largest crowds to watch NCAA volleyball

17,651	17,551	17,430	17,209
Dec. 19, 2015	Dec. 17, 2015	2008 Semifinals	2006 Finals
Omaha, Neb.	Omaha, Neb.	Omaha, Neb.	Omaha, Neb.
CenturyLink Center	CenturyLink Center	Qwest Center	Qwest Center
NU vs. Texas	NU vs. Kansas	NU vs. Penn State	NU vs. Stanford

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Fans Welcome Champions Back to Devaney

PHOTOS BY DARREN IVY/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Clockwise from left. Kenzie Maloney, Mikaela Foecke and Olivia Boender joke during the Dec. 20 celebration. Kelsey Fien enters the Devaney Center with the NCAA Trophy. Cecilia Hall enters through the smoke. Several thousand fans came out to celebrate with the Huskers. Coach John Cook speaks to the crowd as the team listens. A young boy chased a volleyball onto the court during Cook's speech. Chancellor Harvey Perlman and NU president Hank Bounds presented diplomans to Alicia Ostrander and Cecilia Hall, who missed graduation ceremonies due to the NCAA Championship. The team poses with the trophy one final time. Kelly Hunter slaps fives with teammates during the entry. John Cook receives congrats from Nebraska AD Shawn Eichorst.

Story By Shane G. Gilster • Photo courtesy of NU Media Relations

Huskers Complete Perfect Season

Nebraska only second team in NCAA volleyball history to finish undefeated

Nebraska volleyball head coach John Cook took over a Husker program that was coached by a legend in Terry Pettit.

Pettit coached NU volleyball for 23 years (1977-1999), winning a National Championship in 1995.

Cook served as the associate head coach in Pettit's last season and then took over when Pettit retired. Cook's first Husker team began the 2000 season with a No. 11 preseason ranking.

"If there are 10 teams better than us, I think it's going to be a heck of a year in college volleyball, because believe me, we're going to be pretty good," Cook said.

With a rather young, but talented team led by sophomore Greichaly Cepero, Cook's team tore through the non-conference season, beating ranked volleyball powers Colorado State (#13), Notre Dame (#23), Michigan State (#16) and UCLA (#3).

After their strong non-conference showing, NU began conference play ranked #1 in the nation, which now meant they would get everyone's best shot.

The Huskers easily disposed of their conference foes, as Nebraska only lost a total of five games!

With the Big 12 Championship in hand, the Huskers started post-season play by hosting a regional in Lincoln.

After hammering Princeton in three-straight games, the Huskers played one of their toughest matches of the year, when they faced unranked South Carolina.

NU won the first game but dropped the next two to the Lady Gamecocks. Nebraska found themselves on the very of being upset.

The Huskers though dug down deep and fought tooth and nail to win the next two games (15-12, 15-13) to win the match.

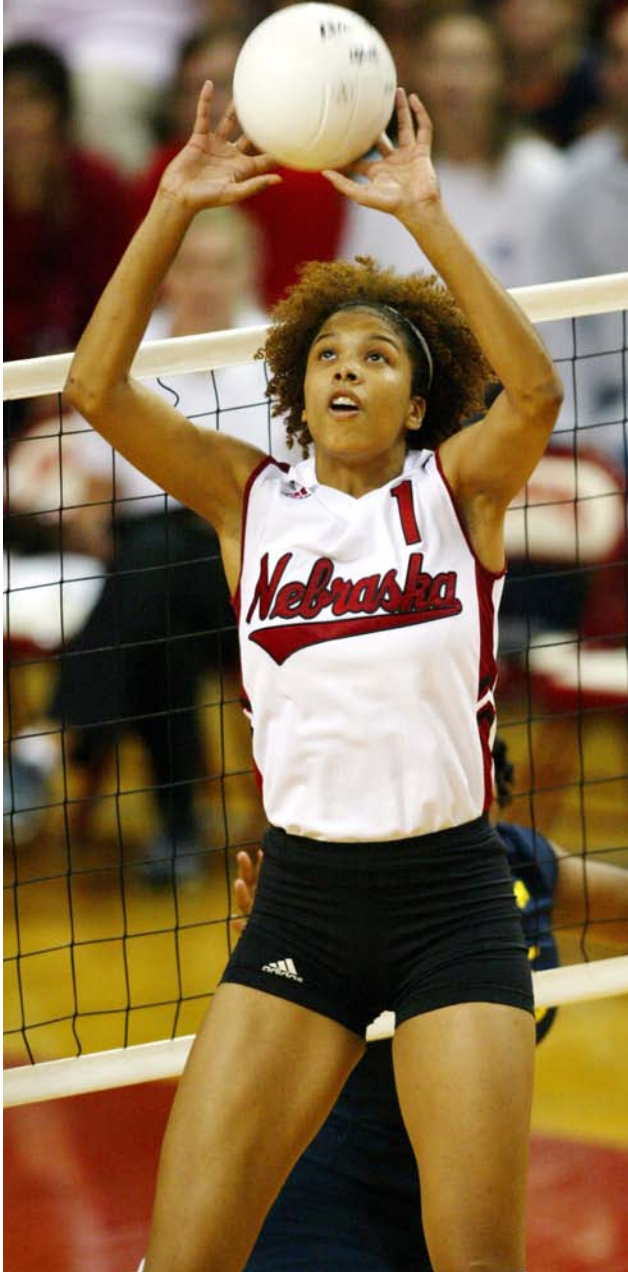
NU moved on to the regional semifinals where again they were to play in the friendly confines of the NU Coliseum.

After their five game wake-up call against South Carolina, Nebraska made short work of No. 15 Ohio State and No. 5 Arizona, winning each match in three games.

The Final Four was now set as Nebraska moved on to Richmond, Virginia. Their first match was against perennial power Hawaii who was ranked #3.

Nebraska dominated the first game (15-3) over the Rainbow Wahine of Hawaii, and went on to win the match 3 games to 1.

The Huskers next took on the No. 4 Wisconsin Badgers for the championship. The Badgers played strong in the second and third games, winning both, but Nebraska hammered them in the first (15-9), fourth (15-2) and fifth (15-9) games to claim the match and the National Title.



Greichaly Cepero

"I have to take my hat off to Wisconsin, because they played a great match," Cook said. "They stressed us like no other team has, but I knew that if we could come out and get the fourth game, we'd win in the fifth."

With a 3-2 win in the championship final, the Huskers became just the second team in NCAA volleyball history to finish a season undefeated.

The Huskers went a perfect 34-0, including 20-0 in Big 12 Conference play.

Cook earned AVCA Coach-of-the-Year honors and Cepero received the AVCA Player-of-the Year award.

"If there are 10 teams better than us, I think it's going to be a heck of a year in college volleyball, because believe me, we're going to be pretty good."

~ NU head coach John Cook on No. 11 preseason ranking ~

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Nebraska Juniors builds national reputation

Nebraska Juniors VBC is a volleyball club that is recognized as one of the best in the country in developing players for college. Over its long history, 95% of its girls have earn scholarships to as many as 82 different volleyball programs.

The University of Nebraska also has had its share of Nebraska Juniors with 31. Currently five are on the current national championship team – Kadie Rolfzen, Amber Rolfzen, Kelly Hunter and Sydney Townsend, and Olivia Boender.

Ryan Gray, who is the associate director for Nebraska Juniors, sees a distinct correlation between the talent in Nebraska kids and the success of the Husker and Creighton volleyball programs.

If you look at the years Nebraska won national championships, each of those rosters had several former Nebraska Juniors athletes playing major roles on the team. Creighton's rise to prominence also correlates to an increased number of in-state Nebraska Juniors players on their rosters. This year, Creighton had four players (Kate Elman, Marysa Wilkinson, Maggie Baumert, and Lauren Smith) that finished their club career playing for Nebraska Juniors.

With so much success Nebraska Juniors VBC has had with its players earning college scholarships, one has to wonder what their secret is.

"We are one of the only clubs that has current or former high school coaches. The relationship we have with college coaches gives our players a huge advantage too. Our coaches don't do this for the money. They do it because they enjoy teaching the game and they take pride in seeing our kids experience success at the next level," said Gray who was an assistant coach at Lincoln Pius X and is currently an assistant coach at Doane University.

The main coach at Nebraska Juniors VBC is its director, Gwen Egbert. Egbert coaches the top 18s team. She played at Nebraska and coached at both Papillion high schools. She now is the head coach at Doane University.

Nebraska Juniors is also about teaching its player's about holding each other accountable, and that philosophy isn't for everybody. Some players excel in that environment while others don't last long.

"We teach our players about accountability and how to be comfortable with being uncomfortable. That kind of culture isn't for everybody. Our players excel in that environment and it has a lot to do with why they are successful at the next level," Egbert said. "Nebraska Juniors players are also known for their willingness to play any position."

Gray added that the best attitude for a player to have is an openness and willingness to change. "To get out of their comfort zone and change the way they've been doing things and trust their coach. By the time they are through Nebraska Juniors training, our kids are coachable, they embrace change, and are comfortable adapting to any situation," he said.

One perfect example of what Gray is talking about is former Nebraska Juniors player, Allison Zastrow, a setter at University of Washington-St. Louis who was recently named 2015 Div. III National Player of the Year. Her coach released a statement about Allison that Gray feels represents everything Nebraska Juniors players are trained to become. "Her coach described Allison as a one of a kind player who is fundamentally sound, an example of effort, skills, and leadership. She is willing to play many different roles, and willing to do whatever is best for her team."

Another example is current Husker Sydney Townsend. "What separated her from other players from when she first came to Nebraska Juniors was her attitude and commitment to improve," Gray said. "Sydney never looked at herself as being good enough and that was her best attribute. That kept her focused and asking for extra time in the gym to work."

One of the main reasons Gray coaches at the Nebraska Juniors is the opportunity to help give kids from all over the state a chance to accomplish their dream of playing at the highest level of college volleyball.

"A few years ago, we went to a tournament in Chicago and beat the

Carley Remmers went from unknown to accepting a scholarship from Ohio University
PHOTO COURTESY OF OHIO ATHLETICS

No. 1 team in the country. Carley Remmers is from Freeman, Nebraska and she shut down their main player who is now an outside hitter at Penn State. At that time Carley had no offers and no one was even looking at her. She is now a freshman Ohio University. A player like her is a great example why I love coaching at Nebraska Juniors," Gray said.

Nebraska Juniors teams tend to play in a lot of national tournaments which provides its players with the toughest competition possible. Over the years they have gained a reputation of being a top 10 program nationwide.

"Historically, our identity is a club full of big and powerful athletes but what allows our teams to compete nationally year after year is our player's discipline and volleyball IQ," Gray said.

Nebraska Juniors was recently asked to be one of only four clubs on a panel at this year's AVCA Convention at the Final Four. "The panel fielded questions about our training, how we've sustained our level of success for over 20 years, cost structure, and our method of selecting teams," Gray said.

Nebraska Juniors teams are not pre-selected. Tryouts are open to anyone interested. The club cost ranges from $1600-$2200 depending on the age of the player. That cost includes all tournaments (including nationals), training, jerseys, bags, and player registration fees. The only out of pocket cost is the player's transportation and lodging when necessary.

Sydney Townsend's best attribute was feeling she wasn't good enough

PHOTO BY MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

- 3 Junior National Championships
- 16 Nebraska Gatorade Players of the Year
- 140 Divison I Athletes
- 34 Division II Athletes
- 7 NAIA Athletes
- 5 Division III Athletes

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- 95% of Nebraska Juniors players earn scholarships to over 82 different college volleyball programs.
- 31 Nebraska Juniors players went on to play for the University of Nebraska
- 31 All-Conference, 23 Academic All-Conference, 7 Academic All-Americans, 21 AVCA All-Americans, 16 AVCA National Champions, 2 AVCA National Players of the Year
- 2 USA Olympic volleyball players
- 2 USA National volleyball players
- 12 International volleyball players

Pictured Clockwise (top left):

Allison Penner - UNC Greensboro
(Tim Cowie/UNCG Athletics)

Allison Zastrow - Washington-St. Louis
(Joe Bergman)

Lexie Elman - Pacific
(Pacific Athletics)

Maggie Baumert - Creighton
(Creighton Athletics)

Current Husker Players

Kadie Rolfzen

Amber Rolfzen

Kelly Hunter

Sydney Townsend

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Sat, Sep 17	Oregon	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Sep 24	Northwestern *	at Evanston, Ill.	-
Sat, Oct 01	Illinois *	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Oct 15	Indiana *	at Bloomington, Ind.	-
Sat, Oct 22	Purdue *	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Oct 29	Wisconsin *	at Madison, Wis.	-
Sat, Nov 05	Ohio State *	at Columbus, Ohio	-
Sat, Nov 12	Minnesota *	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Nov 19	Maryland *	Memorial Stadium	-
Fri, Nov 25	Iowa *	at Iowa City, Iowa	-

*Conference Games

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Stanley Morgan runs back a kick off against UCLA.

Running With A Reason

Huskers avoid worst season in 60 years, finish 6-7

Story by Lanny Holstein • Photos by Tony Kiehn

By the time all was said and done, the 2015 Foster Farms Bowl shared a closer resemblance to something out of a 1990s Nebraska yearbook – complete with gaudy rushing totals, a fullback touchdown and a physical Husker win - than what it was, a meaningless bowl game between two disappointing squads.

Nebraska took it to UCLA in the 37-29 win. The team came out of the gates with a punishing rushing attack featuring bulky senior Imani Cross and promising freshman Devine Ozigbo, and it didn't divert from the plan. The Huskers amassed 326 rushing yards on 62 carries against a poor Bruin rush defense.

"I don't think it was as much what we saw as what we want to do and had a will to do tonight," Nebraska coach Mike Riley said. "I think that football goes better, generally, when you can run the ball well and can impose yourself on the other team."

It's a concept Husker fans had been calling for all year, something the legend of Nebraska football was built on and something Riley's team struggled to establish in his first season.

Riley said after the game what Nebraska did on the ground and up front against UCLA could be somewhat of a blueprint for next season.

"What we want to do next year is be in the top three in the league in running the football," he said. "When you can do that, life goes better everywhere. We didn't have to wait until next year to start with that idea, and I was really excited because physically our guys up front on the offensive line, the tight ends, our fullback really, really went after those guys."

Offensive coordinator Danny Langsdorf took a lot of criticism this season for a perceived unwillingness to stick with the running game, but in Santa Clara he dialed up run after run. Riley said the success Nebraska saw on those plays lead to more run calls.

"We weren't just getting two or three yards. It was five plus, and that feels good," the coach said. "All those second down situations and all those third down situations became easier because of that, and it just builds off of that. You could see it on the sideline. All of our players were getting pumped up."

That included embattled quarterback Tommy Armstrong, who threw for 174 yards on just 19 attempts and avoided throwing an interception for the first time since the Minnesota game.

"It's a lot of motivation in the huddle," Armstrong said of the running success. "After turning 4-to-6 yard run plays into 12, 14, 20

Nebraska senior Jack Gangwish pursues UCLA quarterback Josh Rosen.

yard runs, you know, it's exciting. Those guys kept feeding off of that, and our running backs kept feeding off of it, and I did too."

Armstrong added 76 rushing yards of his own, the majority of it coming on designed quarterback runs dialed up by Langsdorf.

As for the Husker defense and it's quest to slow UCLA true freshman Josh Rosen and the high flying Bruin offense, there were moments of brilliance, like Maliek Collins running amuck in the backfield and Chris Jones intercepting Rosen to seal the game, but there were also enough receivers running free in the secondary to give coordinator Mark Banker some things to think about this offseason.

"For us a defense as a whole, obviously, we had a lot of those same situations where it came down to the end and it didn't go our way," linebacker Josh Banderas said. "It was good for us to put that statement on it that we can finish games, and that no matter what the situation is we can put whatever guy out there and still get the job done."

Riley thought it was a great way to end the season as well.

"Really, really proud of this football team, really proud to be with them," he said. "We, whether it was individual or team, went through a lot of adversity through the year."

"When you go through a stretch like we have, one of the things that you fear the most is that people lose hope, stop working, kind of start losing that identity," Riley said. "From the minute that I started getting to be around these guys, I liked this team and our coaches have continued to work, and it's paid off in just an effort that went right down to the wire and didn't look good a number of times, but they never quit."

Listen to Cole Stukenholtz of Huskers Illustrated radio, Saturday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., all year long!

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Nebraska head coach Mike Riley smiles as he hoists the Foster Farms Bowl championship trophy after the game.

Resilient NU takes advantage of opportunity

STORY BY TERRY DOUGLASS | PHOTO BY TONY KIEHN

Nebraska's remarkable resiliency was on display during its 37-29 victory over UCLA in the Foster Farms Bowl.

Not only did the Cornhuskers overcome a 21-7 second-quarter deficit to record their largest comeback victory in 52 bowl appearances, but they were also able to end a tumultuous season on a winning note. Nebraska closed by winning three of its final four games, including a 39-38 upset victory over eventual Big Ten Conference champion Michigan State, to finish 6-7.

"We probably played our best football game tonight," Nebraska coach Mike Riley said. "When a team can do that and fight through all the stuff that we did, that says a lot about the character of the young men that are in the program."

Nebraska quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. said a 6-7 record "doesn't speak about this team." The junior signal-caller, who earned most valuable player honors, said the Huskers were just happy to get the opportunity to play in a bowl game. NU only qualified because there weren't enough six-win teams to fill all the available bowl slots.

"We were just blessed enough to get another opportunity to prove to everyone why we should've been in a bowl game," Armstrong said. "We lost a lot of close games, but at the end of the day, we've just got to accept it and drive on. That's what we've been doing.

"We proved it. We've got a lot of fight (and) a lot of heart from this team."

Unlike several losses in 2015, Nebraska was able to hold on after building a 37-21 lead with 14:11 to play.

The Bruins pulled to within eight points on a TD and two-point conversion with 11:29 remaining, but defensive back Chris Jones came up with an interception in the end zone with 2:54 left and the Husker offense was able to run out the clock from there.

"It was a good finish, I think, for us as a defense as a whole," Nebraska linebacker Josh Banderas said. "This season, we obviously had some of those same situations where it came down to the last second and it didn't come out how we wanted, but it was good for us to kind of put that statement on it that we can finish games."

Maliek Collins lines up against two UCLA offensive linemen in his final game as a Cornhusker.

Collins announces he will forego his senior season

STORY BY TERRY DOUGLASS | PHOTO BY TONY KIEHN

Nebraska defensive tackle Maliek Collins is taking the opportunity to end his college football career on a high note.

In the postgame news conference following the Cornhuskers' 37-29 victory over UCLA in the Foster Farms Bowl, Collins was asked about his future plans.

The 6-foot-2, 300-pound junior from Kansas City then revealed that despite having a season of eligibility remaining, he had played his final game for Nebraska and plans to enter the 2016 NFL Draft.

"It has always been a dream of mine and I got a good grade back," Collins said, referring to feedback he had received from a NFL advisory group. "I talked it over with my teammates and I talked it over with Coach (Mike) Riley and it seems like the best decision for me.

"Me and Coach Riley had been talking about it for a little bit and it was only right to do it after a bowl win – a bowl victory and do it the right way."

Riley said he supports Collins' decision to turn pro early.

"First of all, it's a personal decision," Riley said. "I've been involved in a few of them before and my basic response is I'll give you advice if you want it and it is personal and whichever way you go, we will back you.

"This is a wise move based on what he knows. I'd really like to coach him another year, but we'll have fun watching him play."

Nebraska linebacker Josh Banderas said he's enjoyed being Collins' teammate.

"It's been awesome," Banderas said. "I got to play behind him and he's kept numerous amounts of offensive linemen off me.

"I'm glad I came in with him, glad I got to be his friend and he's going to do great in the NFL."

Collins started 12 of 13 games for Nebraska this season and finished with 29 total tackles, including seven tackles for loss with 2.5 sacks.

After beating the Bruins, Collins said he felt like he had saved his best moment at Nebraska for last.

"This will be the over-riding memory right here, this win against UCLA – a team I'd never beat as a Cornhusker," Collins said. "Just sharing this memory with my teammates and my boys that I came in with."

Nebraska 37, UCLA 29

Dec. 26, 2015 at Levi Stadium in Santa Clara, California

Attendance: 33,527

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	Total
UCLA	7	14	0	8	**29**
Nebraska	7	14	9	7	**37**

Qtr	Time	Scoring Play	V-H
1st	10:17	UCLA - Perkins 1 yd run (Fairbairn kick), 10-79 4:43	7 - 0
	03:50	NEB - Cross, Imani 1 yd run (Brown, Drew kick), 12-75 6:27	7 - 7
2nd	11:04	UCLA - Walker 60 yd pass from Rosen (Fairbairn kick), 4-86 1:38	14 - 7
	07:55	UCLA - Starks 26 yd pass from Rosen (Fairbairn kick), 4-68 1:36	21 - 7
	06:23	NEB - Newby, Terrell 3 yd run (Brown, Drew kick), 4-75 1:32	21 - 14
	00:52	NEB - Janovich, Andy 1 yd run (Brown, Drew kick), 8-73 3:31	21 - 21
3rd	10:37	NEB - Morgan Jr., S. 22 yd pass from Armstrong Jr. (Brown, Drew kick failed), 9-78 4:23	21 - 27
	04:50	NEB - Brown, Drew 20 yd field goal, 11-67 4:32	21 - 30
4th	14:11	NEB - Armstrong Jr. 3 yd run (Brown, Drew kick), 9-51 4:01	21 - 37
	11:29	UCLA - Payton 9 yd pass from Rosen (Duarte pass from Rosen), 8-76 2:35	29 - 37

Tight end Cethan Carter runs with the ball against the Bruins.

Nebraska's captains Nate Gerry, Maliek Collins, Tommy Armstrong Jr. and Alex Lewis come out together one final time.

Jordan Westerkamp runs with the ball after making one of his two catches in the game.

Team Statistics

	UCLA	NEB
FIRST DOWNS	17	31
Rushing	2	17
Passing	14	10
Penalty	1	4
NET YARDS RUSHING	67	326
Rushing Attempts	16	62
Average Per Rush	4.2	5.3
Rushing Touchdowns	1	4
Yards Gained Rushing	83	355
Yards Lost Rushing	16	29
NET YARDS PASSING	319	174
Completions-Attempts-Int	26-41-2	12-19-0
Average Per Attempt	7.8	9.2
Average Per Completion	12.3	14.5
Passing Touchdowns	3	1
TOTAL OFFENSE YARDS	386	500
Total offense plays	57	81
Average Gain Per Play	6.8	6.2
Fumbles: Number-Lost	2-0	1-1
Penalties: Number-Yards	7-56	6-38
PUNTS-YARDS	4-167	3-125
Average Yards Per Punt	41.8	41.7
Net Yards Per Punt	39.8	41.7
Inside 20	1	0
50+ Yards	0	0
Touchbacks	0	0
Fair catch	1	1
KICKOFFS-YARDS	5-319	7-439
Average Yards Per Kickoff	63.8	62.7
Net Yards Per Kickoff	43.2	40.4
Touchbacks	3	1
Punt returns: Number-Yards-TD	0-0-0	1-8-0
Average Per Return	0.0	8.0
Kickoff returns: Number-Yds-TD	6-131-0	2-28-0
Average Per Return	21.8	14.0
Interceptions: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	2-0-0
Fumble Returns: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	0-0-0
Miscellaneous Yards	0	0
Possession Time	21:45	38:15
1st Quarter	5:38	9:22
2nd Quarter	5:43	9:17
3rd Quarter	2:53	12:07
4th Quarter	7:31	7:29
Third-Down Conversions	5 of 12	7 of 11
Fourth-Down Conversions	1 of 2	0 of 0
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	2-3	5-6
Touchdowns	2-3	4-6
Field goals	0-3	1-6
Sacks By: Number-Yards	1-7	0-0
PAT Kicks	3-3	4-5
Field Goals	0-1	1-1
Points off turnovers	7	0

TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Above: Terrell Newby and Brandon Reilly celebrate Newby's touchdown run. Left: Tommy Armstrong Jr. gets interviewed by ESPN after the bowl victory.

Individual Statistics

UCLA

Rushing	No.	Gain	Loss	Net	TD	Lg	Avg
Perkins	12	68	0	68	1	32	5.7
Starks	2	11	5	6	0	11	3.0
Johnson, S	1	4	0	4	0	4	4.0
Rosen	1	0	11	-11	0	0	-11.0
Totals	16	83	16	67	1	32	4.2

Passing	C-A-I	Yds	TD	Long	Sack
Rosen	26-40-2	319	3	60	0
Fuller	0-1-0	0	0	0	0
Totals	26-41-2	319	3	60	0

Receiving	No.	Yards	TD	Long
Andrews	5	24	0	22
Duarte	4	52	0	22
Walker	3	88	1	60
Payton	3	37	1	22
Johnson, S	3	23	0	18
Perkins	3	8	0	5
Starks	2	29	1	26
Jamabo	1	36	0	36
Judge	1	14	0	14
Massington	1	8	0	8
Totals	26	319	3	60

Punting	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	In20	TB
Mengel	4	167	41.8	47	1	0
Totals	4	167	41.8	47	1	0

	Punt			Kickoff			Intercept		
Returns	No	Yds	Lg	No	Yds	Lg	No	Yds	Lg
Davis, R	0	0	0	6	131	36	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	0	6	131	36	0	0	0

Field goals	Qtr	Time	Dist	Result
Fairbairn	4th	05:49	46 yards	Missed

Kickoffs	No.	Yards	Avg	TB	OB
Fairbairn	5	319	63.8	3	0

All-purpose	Run	Rcv	KR	PR	IR	Total
Davis, R	0	0	131	0	0	131
Walker	0	88	0	0	0	88
Perkins	68	8	0	0	0	76
Duarte	0	52	0	0	0	52

Nebraska

Rushing	No.	Gain	Loss	Net	TD	Lg	Avg
Ozigbo, Devine	21	90	3	87	0	12	4.1
Armstrong Jr.	10	97	21	76	1	26	7.6
Cross, Imani	15	56	1	55	1	7	3.7
Janovich, Andy	6	31	0	31	1	12	5.2
Turner, Jamal	1	22	0	22	0	22	22.0
Newby, Terrell	4	22	0	22	1	15	5.5
Carter, Cethan	1	16	0	16	0	16	16.0
Reilly, Brandon	1	13	0	13	0	13	13.0
Moore, Alonzo	1	8	0	8	0	8	8.0
TEAM	2	0	4	-4	0	0	-2.0
Totals	62	355	29	326	4	26	5.3

Passing	C-A-I	Yds	TD	Long	Sack
Armstrong Jr.	12-19-0	174	1	28	1
Totals	12-19-0	174	1	28	1

Receiving	No.	Yards	TD	Long
Reilly, Brandon	3	38	0	14
Westerkamp, J.	2	44	0	28
Carter, Cethan	2	32	0	24
Morgan Jr., S.	2	31	1	22
Ozigbo, Devine	1	15	0	15
Moore, Alonzo	1	13	0	13
Newby, Terrell	1	1	0	1
Totals	12	174	1	28

Punting	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	In20	TB
Foltz, Sam	3	125	41.7	48	0	0
Totals	3	125	41.7	48	0	0

	Punt			Kickoff			Intercept		
Returns	No	Yds	Lg	No	Yds	Lg	No	Yds	Lg
Westerkamp, J.	1	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morgan Jr., S.	0	0	0	2	28	16	0	0	0
Jones, Chris	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Kalu, Joshua	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Totals	1	8	8	2	28	16	2	0	0

Field goals	Qtr	Time	Dist	Result
Brown, Drew	3rd	04:50	20 yards	Good

Kickoffs	No.	Yards	Avg	TB	OB
Brown, Drew	7	439	62.7	1	0

All-purpose	Run	Rcv	KR	PR	IR	Total
Ozigbo, Devine	87	15	0	0	0	102
Armstrong Jr.	76	0	0	0	0	76
Morgan Jr., S.	0	31	28	0	0	59
Cross, Imani	55	0	0	0	0	55

FUMBLES: UCLA-Perkins 1-0; Rosen 1-0. Nebraska-Armstrong Jr. 1-1.

TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Above: Linebacker Josh Banderas looks for the play call. Left: Michael Rose-Ivey calls out signals to the defense.

Defensive Statistics

#	UCLA	Solo	Ast	Total	Sacks-Yds	TFL-Yds	FF	FR-Yds	Int-Yds	BrUp	Blks	QBH
97	Clark, K	8	3	11	1.0-7	2-8	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Wadood	8	2	10	-	1-2	-	1-0	-	1	-	-
0C	Goforth	5	4	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
51	Wallace	4	4	8	-	1-0	-	-	-	-	-	1
99	Dickerson	5	0	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
96	Ankou	3	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	Adams	3	2	5	-	1-14	-	-	-	-	-	-
42	Young	2	3	5	-	1-1	1	-	-	-	-	-
12	Brown	2	3	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
44	Savaiinaea	3	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
0F	Johnson, J	3	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
0	Rios	3	0	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
98	McKinley	2	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	Fisher	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
40	Griffin	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1E	Spencer	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	Davis, R	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
28	Lagace	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
58	Hollins	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Totals	54	28	82	1.0-7	6-25	1	1-0	0-0	1	0	2

#	Nebraska	Solo	Ast	Total	Sacks-Yds	TFL-Yds	FF	FR-Yds	Int-Yds	BrUp	Blks	QBH
1B	Kalu, Joshua	7	1	8	-	-	-	-	1-0	1	-	-
28	Cockrell, B.	4	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	Reed, Antonio	4	0	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
25	Gerry, Nate	3	1	4	-	1-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
52	Banderas, Josh	1	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
24	Williams, Aaron	3	0	3	-	1-5	-	-	-	-	-	-
1A	Rose-Ivey, M.	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Young, Dedrick	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8A	Jones, Chris	2	0	2	-	-	-	-	1-0	1	-	-
35	Janovich, Andy	2	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	Maurice, Kevin	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
98	Valentine, V.	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
90	McMullen, Greg	1	1	2	-	1-5	-	-	-	-	-	1
2B	Taylor, Adam	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
49	Weber, Chris	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
88	Dzuris, Ross	1	0	1	-	1-5	-	-	-	-	-	-
43	Ferguson, Tyrin	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
56	Simpson, Brad	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
95	Gangwish, Jack	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
7	Collins, Maliek	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
	Totals	35	14	49	0.0-0	4-17	1	0-0	2-0	3	0	4

Nebraska 37
UCLA 29

PHOTOS BY TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Clockwise from above: Tommy Armstrong Jr. awaits the snap as lineman Zach Sterup prepares to block. Terrell Newby waltzes into the endzone for a touchdown against the Bruins. Brandon Reilly stretches out to try and make a catch against UCLA. Defensive end Jack Gangwish tries to get by the UCLA blocker. NU was making its first appearance in the Foster Farms Bowl. Jordan Weserkamp fights for the ball in the endzone. Nate Gerry jogs off after being ejected for targeting.

Ucla

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FOSTER FARMS
BOWL

95

Husker Report Card

RUSHING OFFENSE: The Huskers had their best rushing game of the season, running for 326 total yards against a UCLA defense that begged to be run on. Nebraska used its by-committee approach well, with nine different players carrying the ball, led by freshman Devine Ozigbo, who ran 21 times for 87 yards. Four different Huskers scored rushing touchdowns, and quarterback Tommy Armstrong ran 10 times for 76 yards and a touchdown. Nebraska talked frequently going into the game about wanting to feature more of a power running game, and the Huskers showed what they were capable of in the season finale. *– Michael Bruntz*

A+

PASSING OFFENSE: Coming into the bowl game, UCLA had the top passing defense in the Pac-12, and yet Nebraska was able to move the ball through the air when it needed to. Tommy Armstrong finished the game 12-for-19 through the air for 174 yards and a touchdown. More importantly, Armstrong didn't throw an interception in the contest. We'll give bonus points here as well for Stanley Morgan's one-handed touchdown catch. *– Michael Bruntz*

B+

RUSHING DEFENSE: Once again, Nebraska's rushing defense held up well to a solid running back. UCLA running back Paul Perkins came into the game as one of the top running backs on the West Coast, but Nebraska kept Perkins bottled up, and then tightened the noose when the Huskers took the lead in the third quarter. Nebraska held UCLA to just 67 yards rushing and one touchdown. The Huskers looked like a confident defense, bouncing runs to the outside and then swarming to the ball to make tackles. *– Michael Bruntz*

A

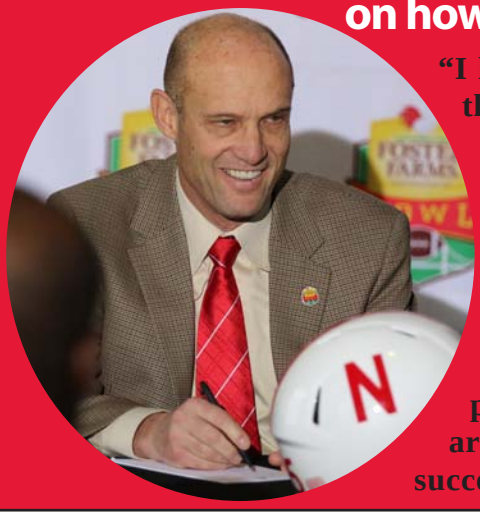
PASSING DEFENSE: Former five-star quarterback Josh Rosen looked the part of an elite quarterback against the Huskers, finishing 26-of-40 for three touchdowns and 319 yards. Nebraska, though, was able to intercept Rosen twice and did a much better job in the second half of flushing the freshman quarterback from the pocket where he had less success completing passes. Though Nebraska wasn't able to sack Rosen, the Huskers' defensive front did a nice job of getting hits on the quarterback. *– Michael Bruntz*

C+

KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS: It was a pretty quiet day for the Huskers' special teams units. Drew Brown kicked a 20-yard field goal and missed an extra point. Sam Foltz punted three times for an average of nearly 42 yards. Nebraska covered kicks and punts relatively well, and didn't make any mistakes that cost the Huskers field position or lead to any big swings of momentum. *– Michael Bruntz*

B-

Quoting NU head coach Mike Riley on how the offense played:



"I hope this is the sign of how things can be when you do run the football effectively. It's a common denominator of what we can do if we want to win a championship and that's what we want to do. It helps everything, protection, a better passing game, it all revolves around it. We were having success."

Game Notes &

SENDING A MESSAGE

After beating UCLA 37-29 in the Foster Farms Bowl, Nebraska's players and coaches felt they proved themselves better than the team's 5-7 regular season record and 6-7 overall record would indicate.

"Like I've said, this 5-7 record doesn't speak about this team," quarterback Tommy Armstrong said. "We were just blessed enough to get another opportunity to show everyone why we deserved to be in a bowl game. We lost a lot of close games, but at the end of the day, we just have to accept it and drive on. That's what we've been doing."

Coach Mike Riley had a similar message to fans who may have jumped off the bandwagon this year about the way his team played every game close.

"At least we gave ourselves a chance to compete in a ton of games, and in this last month we have played our best football," he said. "We played our best football game tonight. When a team can do that, can fight through all that stuff, that says a lot about the character of the young men that are in our program."

GERRY TOSSED, AGAIN

With under a minute to go in the first half Nebraska safety Nate Gerry found himself in a familiar position, waiting on a replay review that would determine his fate in the rest of the game.

The junior came down hard on UCLA running back Paul Perkins as the ball carrier turned up field on a swing route, and the side judge called him for targeting - an ejection-worthy offense. As Gerry waited for the verdict, he chatted with opposing coach Jim Mora Jr.

"I thought it was a good hit, a clean hit," Mora said. "I was standing next to the young man down on the field, and that's what I was telling him. I said, 'That's a really good football play.' I've seen a lot of really good football plays, and I was stunned that he got thrown out of the game, quite frankly. I didn't see that as a dirty play at all."

Mora's opinion, though nice to have, wasn't the one that mattered, and Gerry was thrown out of the game upon further review. It was his second consecutive game with an ejection for targeting.

Gerry's coach, Mike Riley, agreed with Mora.

"Well, that would be exactly my take too," he said after hearing of Mora's comments. "From what I saw on the film, first of all I didn't think it was a penalty, and second I couldn't believe it wasn't overturned."

HUSKRS IN-N-OUT?

Being back on the West Coast had some advantages for Mike Riley, the longtime Oregon State coach. A chance to see some important recruiting

Devine Ozigbo led the Huskers in rushing with 87 yards in the Foster Farms Bowl.

targets was probably the biggest, but being back in his old stomping grounds afforded the coach a chance to visit one of his favorite restaurants as well.

Riley was known for taking his Oregon State teams to In-N-Out Burger, a West Coast, fast food chain, after wins.

Whether or not Nebraska enjoyed burgers and fries after the Foster Farms Bowl win is a bit hazy.

"We passed one on the way in, and I said, 'Dan (Van De Riet), you got the In-N-Out ready to go after the game?' He just shook his head at me, so I don't know what that meant."

RUNNING WILD

It appears that Nebraska rode the hot hand a little bit against UCLA.

Offensive coordinator Danny Langsdorf told reporters leading up to the game that big bruiser Imani Cross would be the feature back, but the workload didn't turn out that way.

"We really want to give Imani some work and roll in Terrell (Newby) and Devine (Ozigbo)," Langsdorf said before the game. "That's kind of how it's been going, just trying to give everyone some reps and keep them fresh."

As it turned out, Ozigbo busted a few runs in the early going and found himself with 20 carries for 87 yards by the game's end. Cross did notch 15 carries for 55 yards himself, and Newby only got four.

The tailback position is still wide open going into next season with Ozigbo and Newby returning, along with freshman Mikale Wilbon and the addition of 2016 commit Tre Bryant.

2MinuteDrill

YOUNG TALENT

RILEY POINTS OUT SEVERAL

Dedrick Young

JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Stories by Lanny Holstein

There are always a handful of Huskers who break out each season, guys who were just names on a roster before the year but turn out to be major contributors by season's end.

Coach Mike Riley took some time out before the bowl game to recognize a few of those guys from this season. Riley started with Nick Gates, the redshirt freshman tackle, who took over for incumbent starter Zach Sterup a few games in.

"You know, not too often does a redshirt freshman play as much as he has and start like he has," the coach said. "I think Nick has two separators, maybe three. One is just physical talent, and the other is intelligence."

Gates is one of the main reasons many feel good about the Nebraska offensive line next season even though it loses three starters. His emergence allowed Sterup to move inside to guard, where he thrived, while Gates manned the outside. It was more than just physical talent and intelligence that got Gates on the field this season though, according to Riley.

"The confident way he carries himself," Riley said. "His demeanor is good, and you like the way he likes to compete. I think the sky's the limit for that guy."

On the defensive side, Riley singled out Dedrick Young for his exploits at linebacker this season.

At a position where the Huskers were riddled with injuries up and down the lineup, Young was a constant for much of the season as a true freshman.

"He's a different kind of guy, that guy," Riley said. "He's smart, very tough, is kind of unaffected by the scene. He just strolls in and plays football. Love that guy."

Young wound up with 61 tackles on the season, tied with fellow linebacker Josh Banderas for fourth most on the team.

"He's the kind of guy that should just do nothing but get better and better because he has all the parts," Riley said. "He's a high character guy, has ability, is a hard worker, is a good student. There are no roadblocks ahead that I see for him in being a really good player for a long time."

Young's emergence at linebacker may not have come as a huge surprise to those who followed his path to Nebraska closely. He was one of a handful of high school seniors to graduate early and join the Huskers for spring practice a year ago, helping springboard him to his current spot.

Riley is hoping another small group of early-enrolling recruits are able to have a similar impact next season. In general, early enrollees are guys with the right mental makeup, he said.

"These guys that are coming in, you can imagine already what kind of work ethic they have to be ready to graduate and go someplace midyear, so you know they are the kind of guy that takes care of business," Riley said.

That group includes highly touted southern California quarterback Patrick O'Brien, a potential challenger for Tommy Armstrong's quarterback job.

"When I went to see Patrick, he was just getting done with a workout and he had another workout that evening, you know, he was out throwing," Riley said of his last visitwith the high school signal caller. "These are guys who are already self motivated, and as it was last year, these guys will be the easy guys.

"Those guys, you just show them where everything is, and they will take off from there."

CARTER COMING ON

Tight end Cethan Carter emerged as one of Nebraska's top weapons in 2015 after starting the season with a 2-game suspension.

The 6-foot-4, 240 pound target burst onto the scene against Illinois with three catches for 63 yards, including an impressive grab on a jump ball near the end of the first half.

He reeled in 13 catches for 210 yards and a score against Purdue, Rutgers, Iowa and UCLA, ending the season with a bang. Carter went reception-less against Michigan State, but his work against highly touted Spartan defensive end Shilique Calhoun may have been the most impressive thing he did all season.

"He's been a great threat as a pass catcher, and he's really a physical blocker," offensive coordinator Danny Langsdorf said. "I think that's where he's really improved is in his blocking, being really physical in there. Of course, he's a weapon in the passing game too, so we try to find different ways to get him the ball."

That meant giving Carter the ball on an end around against Rutgers, a play that went for a 32 yard touchdown.

"We are trying to move him around a little bit and get him in the right matchup," Langsdorf said. "A lot of times he's a mismatch with those defenders, so we are trying to move him to get him as the No. 1 option, and I just think he's taken on that role great."

EYE ON THE FUTURE

There was some question, what with a 5-7 record and all, if Nebraska would earn a bowl berth and the extra practices that come with it this season. When they did get that extra game and those extra practices, the Huskers made sure they got the most out of the opportunity. Obviously, they found a way to come home from Santa Clara victorious, but they also used the extra practice time a little differently than normal.

"We got a lot of really good work in Lincoln with the younger guys," offensive coordinator Danny Langsdorf said. "We haven't as much (in Santa Clara) because we are focused on the game plan, but we've had a lot of extra work for the young guys - dedicated young guy periods at the end of practice."

Nebraska split its workouts into two periods for a few weeks back home in Lincoln, one period for the whole team and another for the younger guys who may have been with the scout team or down on the depth chart during the season. They did so with an eye on the future.

"It's like having an extra spring practice," Langsdorf said. "It's been really beneficial to get them reps back into our system and get them ready for spring practice."

RESHUFFLING THE SECONDARY

Mike Riley dismissed cornerback Jonathan Rose from the team before Nebraska's appearance in the Foster Farms Bowl for what he deemed a "violation of team rules."

The senior had been one of the main outside cornerbacks throughout the majority of the season, so his dismissal left defensive coordinator Mark Banker with a bit of reshuffling to do in the secondary.

Aaron Williams, who had played some at safety earlier in the year, took over as the nickel back for the bowl game with Joshua Kalu moving to the outside for the entirety of the game opposite Chris Jones.

"Well, we're not very deep," Riley said going into the game. "The next guy in would be Trai Mosley right now, and if we can hold up I feel really good about the guys that are playing. I think that is a position that has sort of solidified towards the end of the year, so I'm excited about Chris Jones and of course Josh Kalu."

RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER
RECRUITING EDITOR
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

Husker staff looking to fill out Class of 2016 recruits

Nebraska's 2016 class was slow to start before the Huskers ripped off a bunch of commitments over the summer. Things slowed down in the fall, but the Huskers are hoping to heat up in January to finish things off.

Here's a look at what Nebraska has in its 2016 class thus far:

KEY STATS

Committed: 15

Spots available: 7-10, estimated

Composite rating breakdown: 0 five-stars, 3 four-stars, 12 three-stars, 0 two-stars by 247Sports Composite.

Average rating: 0.8689 according to 247Sports Composite

National ranking: 31

Big Ten ranking: 6

THREE KEY COMMITMENTS

1. Patrick O'Brien - The quarterback from California is going to have a lot of people watching him this spring to see where he's at in relation to potentially being a factor for the Huskers. O'Brien enrolls early and will get every opportunity to earn early playing time as a backup or even potentially a starter. The San Juan Hills product put up video game numbers in high school, dominating through the passing game but also adding some scores on the ground too. He arrives in January.

2. John Raridon - Talent wise there's likely no one else in the class who can compare with Raridon. The offensive lineman from West Des Moines has the best film in the class and he's got the mean streak to match while on the field. Raridon is a rare freshman who could help early as an offensive lineman. He'll need to get stronger, but he's technically advanced early.

3. Marquel Dismuke - The highest rated defender in the class thus far, Dismuke is a tremendous athlete and excels at making plays all over the field. He's got great size and length at 6-foot-1 and can play coverage from the safety spot, as well as come into the box and take down running backs. The Huskers had hoped to get him in early and potentially let the freshman take over in the rotation, but will now have to wait until June.

BIGGEST SURPRISE

Perhaps one of the bigger surprises in the 2016 class thus far was Nebraska's unearthing of Tre Bryant. Running back has been a curious position since the new staff took over and the Huskers held an early commitment from Aphonso Thomas, but immediately took a liking to Bryant. The Christian Brothers College product is an excellent runner, showing explosive cutting, good hands out of the backfield and the power needed in the Big Ten. Nebraska got Bryant to flip from Kansas State before he even set foot on campus and he'll be in the mix right away as a freshman.

BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT

Nebraska hasn't been able to attack the defensive end spot as well as one might've hoped coming into the class. The Huskers have some young guys on scout team to watch, but this is an important class in reshaping the defensive line from the previous staff. As things stand right now in-state star Ben Stille holds the team's only defensive line commitment.

BEST STAFF MOVE

There were a few skeptics in December when the Huskers made JD Spielman their first wide receiver commitment. The 5-foot-9, 175-pound athlete could help in a myriad of ways, but it wasn't sure how he'd fit in the offense. After a fantastic senior year, Spielman was named Gatorade player of his state and is clearly the kind of Swiss Army Knife player this staff can take advantage of skills wise.

Don't be surprised if he plays right away on special teams and even has a few special packages. Spielman might be one of Nebraska's most exciting player already next season.

CLASS SLEEPER

Linebacker Greg Simmons spurned his hometown Miami Hurricanes to commit to Nebraska in June. The move was surprising on the surface but Simmons absolutely fits the kind of blue collar worker mentality Trent Bray appears to be bringing to the linebacker room. Simmons is a punishing hitter and he looks to be a good athlete and an instinctive player. The linebacker might redshirt next season but he'll be in the mix - likely at MIKE - in 2017.

THREE KEY TARGETS

1. Matt Farniok - The Huskers have only four offensive tackles returning next season. Farniok is a 500-mile radius guy, a winning locker room presence and can handler the right tackle spot. Nebraska has been working hard on the lineman ever since Mike Riley took the job last December. Farniok made his official visit this month and plans to make a decision in January. Iowa remains the opposition.

2. Desmond Fitzpatrick - Nebraska wide receivers coach Keith Williams has made it apparent to this four-star pass catcher out of Michigan, he's No. 1 on the team's board at the position. The Huskers hold a pair of commitments from receivers, but Fitzpatrick has good size and length, making him a strong replacement option in 2017 when Nebraska loses outside receivers Alonzo Moore and Brandon Reilly.

3. Tramal Ivy - There might be better talented options out there for the Huskers, but Ivy would fill a big need at defensive end. The Butler Community College product actually decommitted shortly after he received a visit from Nebraska in December and he plans to make an official visit to Lincoln in January. The Huskers have a big need for help with pass rush and Ivy looks to be someone who can provide a little speed on the edge." N

STATE OF THE HUSKERS

Did Huskers establish identity in bowl game?

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

Read daily Husker reports from Michael Bruntz at HuskersIllustrated.com Follow him on Twitter @michaelbruntz

SANTA CLARA, Calif. – UCLA head coach Jim Mora sat before reporters deep in the bowels of Levi's Stadium minutes after his team had given 326 yards on 62 carries to a Nebraska team that looked as dominating on the ground as the oft-lauded Husker teams of the past.

To Mora's right was defensive lineman Kenny Clark, a likely first round draft pick who was on the receiving end of the Huskers' punishment.

"Nebraska played tough, physical, the way you're supposed to play," Mora said.

In a season where Nebraska struggled to run the ball consistently when it needed to most, the success the Huskers had against the Bruins was striking, and sets up a blueprint that Nebraska would like to follow going forward.

During bowl practices leading up to the Foster Farms Bowl, Nebraska head coach Mike Riley mentioned multiple times that Nebraska wants to be among the top three rushing offenses in the Big Ten, a mark that it fell short of in 2015.

"The game plan was running the football," Nebraska head coach Mike Riley said after the game. "It is what we thought we could do and what we want to do. Our goal next year is to be in the top three in the country running the ball. Our guys up front, our line, tight ends and fullback, did a great job. We really went after those guys, we were physical and it was fun to watch our guys keep attacking."

Nebraska averaged 5.3 yards per carry on those 62 totes, and nine different Nebraska players carried the ball in the game, led by freshman Devine Ozigbo, who had 21 carries for 87 yards, while Tommy Armstrong added 10 carries for 76 yards and a touchdown. Senior Imani Cross also had 15 carries for 55 yards and a touchdown before battling a knee issue in the second half.

The Huskers used the jet sweep game to perfection, and tight end Cethan Carter capped the game with a 16-yard carry in the fourth quarter that iced the win for the Huskers — a nice victory cigar on a night where UCLA's 88th-ranked rushing defense struggled to know what was coming.

Nebraska held a 17-minute advantage in time of possession, and the Huskers converted 7-of-11 third down opportunities.

"I hope this is the sign of how things can be when you do run the football effectively," Riley said. "It's a common denominator of what we can do if we want to win a championship and that's what we want to do. It helps everything, protection, a better passing game, it all revolves around it.

"We were having success. It wasn't just two or three yards, it was five-plus. That feels good. All of those situations become easier. I could feel it on the sidelines. They could feel it on the field. Everyone was getting excited as we controlled the line of scrimmage."

Nebraska's domination of the line of scrimmage was a stark contrast to losses against Illinois and Purdue where the Huskers failed to establish a stronghold in the trenches. The Huskers likely could have wrapped up wins against Illinois and Wisconsin had they been able to pick up first downs on the ground late in the game. Against UCLA, the passing and play action games worked well because the Huskers were in favorable down and distance situations.

Offensive coordinator Danny Langsdorf said it was easy to get into a rhythm offensively when Nebraska was being as consistent as it was on the ground.

"When you have success early in the game, you can really get into a rhythm," Langsdorf said. "When you're getting zero or one yard, it's hard. But when you're able to hit some inside and outside runs early, it's great and it's when we're at our best."

Langsdorf said the matchup against UCLA dictated that the Huskers stick to the ground game.

"I thought our matchups were good tonight," Langsdorf said. "If we could run like that every game, we would have run the ball all the time, but we couldn't. But that shows when you hit six, seven yarders early in the game, you have them off-balance with things, it's easier to stay heavy and running."

During warmups, offensive line coach Mike Cavanaugh fired up his offensive linemen, setting them up for their best game of the year.

"We're going to whip their asses all night," Cavanaugh yelled between the popping of pads. "All night."

If Nebraska is going to take a big step forward in 2016, that kind of performance is going to need to be a regular occurrence.

SEPT. 5	SEPT. 12	SEPT. 19	SEPT. 26	OCT. 3	OCT. 10	OCT. 17	OCT. 24
33-28 LOSS	48-7 WIN	36-33 LOSS	36-28 WIN	14-13 LOSS	23-21 LOSS	48-25 WIN	30-28 LOSS
FINAL RECORD	FINAL RECORD	FINAL RECORD	FINAL RECORD	FINAL RECORD	FINAL RECORD	FINAL RECORD	FINAL RECORD
9-4	5-7	8-5	9-5	5-7	10-3	6-7	10-3

OCT. 31
55-45 LOSS
FINAL RECORD
2-10

NOV. 7
39-38 WIN
FINAL RECORD
12-2

NOV. 14
31-14 WIN
FINAL RECORD
4-8

NOV. 27
28-20 LOSS
FINAL RECORD
12-2

DEC. 26
37-29 WIN
FINAL RECORD
8-5

NEBRASKA'S 2016 TO 2019 OPPONENTS

2016 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Location
9/3	Fresno State	Lincoln, Neb.
9/10	Wyoming	Lincoln, Neb.
9/17	Oregon	Lincoln, Neb.
10/1	Illinois	Lincoln, Neb.
10/8	Northwestern	Evanston, Ill.
10/15	Indiana	Bloomington, Ind.
10/22	Purdue	Lincoln, Neb.
10/29	Wisconsin	Madison, Wis.
11/5	Ohio State	Columbus, Ohio
11/12	Minnesota	Lincoln, Neb.
11/19	Maryland	Lincoln, Neb.
11/25	Iowa	Iowa City, Ia.
12/3	Big Ten Game	Indianapolis, Ind.

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Location
9/2	TBA	Lincoln, Neb.
9/9	Oregon	Eugene, Ore.
9/16	Northern Illinois	Lincoln, Neb.
9/23	Rutgers	Lincoln, Neb.
9/30	Illinois	Champaign, Ill.
10/7	Wisconsin	Lincoln, Neb.
10/14	Ohio State	Lincoln, Neb.
10/28	Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.
11/4	Northwestern	Lincoln, Neb.
11/11	Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minn.
11/18	Penn State	State College, Pa.
11/24	Iowa	Lincoln, Neb.
12/2	Big Ten Game	Indianapolis, Ind.

2018 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Location
9/1	Akron	Lincoln, Neb.
9/8	Colorado	Lincoln, Neb.
9/15	Troy	Lincoln, Neb.
9/22	Michigan	Ann Arbor, Mich.
9/29	Purdue	Lincoln, Neb.
10/6	Wisconsin	Madison, Wis.
10/13	Northwestern	Evanston, Ill.
10/20	Minnesota	Lincoln, Neb.
11/3	Ohio State	Columbus, Ohio
11/10	Illinois	Lincoln, Neb.
11/17	Michigan State	Lincoln, Neb.
11/23	Iowa	Iowa City, Iowa
12/1	Big Ten Game	Indianapolis, Ind.

2019 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Location
8/31	South Alabama	Lincoln, Neb.
9/7	Colorado	Boulder, Colo.
9/14	Northern Illinois	Lincoln, Neb.
9/21	Illinois	Champaign, Ill.
9/28	Ohio State	Lincoln, Neb.
10/5	Northwestern	Lincoln, Neb.
10/12	Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minn.
10/26	Indiana	Lincoln, Neb.
11/2	Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.
11/16	Wisconsin	Lincoln, Neb.
11/23	Maryland	College Park, Md.
11/29	Iowa	Lincoln, Neb.
12/7	Big Ten Game	Indianapolis, Ind.

Game 1
BYU 33, Nebraska 28
Sept. 5, 2015 in Lincoln, Neb.

NU lost on this hail mary pass.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

First-year head coach Mike Riley's debut at Nebraska was spoiled in stunning fashion as BYU backup quarterback Tanner Mangum completed a 42-yard Hail Mary touchdown pass to Mitch Mathews as time expired at Memorial Stadium. Trailing 28-27 with 48 seconds to play, Mangum drove the Cougars from their own 35-yard line and completed the game-winner on a fourth-and-3 play as the Cornhuskers rushed three.

Mangum, who was 7 of 11 passing for 111 yards, combined with injured starter Taysom Hill to burn Nebraska for 379 yards through the air. Hill completed 21 of 34 pass attempts for 268 yards and a TD and rushed for 72 yards and two more scores before leaving early in the fourth quarter with a season-ending foot injury. Nebraska's Tommy Armstrong Jr. Was 24 of 41 for 319 yards and three TDS, completing seven balls to wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp for 107 yards and a score. However, the Huskers rushed for just 126 yards and failed to convert three third-and-short opportunities in the fourth quarter, giving BYU life. It was the first loss in a season opener for Nebraska since falling to Florida State in 1985, ending the Huskers' nation-leading streak. Linebacker Dedrick Young became the fourth Husker true freshman to start a season opener since the mid-1940s, joining Ralph Brown (1996), Terrence Nunn (2004) and Tyler Moore (2011).

Game 2
Nebraska 48, S. Alabama 9
Sept. 12, 2015 in Lincoln, Neb.

Terrel Newby goes in for a score against South Alabama.

JIM RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

I-back Terrell Newby set career highs with 28 rushing attempts for 198 yards and two TDs as Nebraska outgained South Alabama 561-332 in total yardage to give Mike Riley his first victory as the Cornhuskers' head coach.

After rushing for just 126 yards in a season-opening loss to BYU, Nebraska enjoyed a 258-19 advantage on the ground against the Jaguars. Newby carried on nine of the Huskers' first 15 plays from scrimmage on his way to his second career 100-yard rushing game and also had a one-handed catch for an 8-yard TD. Quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. Completed 21 of 30 pass attempts for 270 yards and two TDs as Nebraska led 24-0 at halftime and extended the margin to 31-0 in the third quarter. Wide receiver Brandon Reilly finished with five receptions for 71 yards, while junior wide receiver Lane Hovey established career highs with five receptions for 68 yards. Safety Nate Gerry's had a first-quarter interception and linebacker Michael Rose-Ivey had 10 tackles as Nebraska held an opponent to single digits in scoring for the first time since a 55-7 win over Florida Atlantic in 2014. The 19 yards rushing allowed by the Blackshirts was their best performance since holding Michigan to minus-17 yards rushing in 2013. Huskers' place-kicker Drew Brown rebounded from a rough season opener, converting field-goal attempts of 42 and 25 yards.

Game 3
Miami 36, Nebraska 33 OT
Sept. 19, 2015 in Miami, Fla.

Stanley Morgan makes a tough catch against Miami.

ANDREW BARRY/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Nebraska overcame a 23-point fourth-quarter deficit, but a rally that could've been the largest comeback victory in school history ultimately came up short in overtime. An interception by Corn Elder on the first play of the extra period and an unsportsmanlike-like conduct penalty on Cornhuskers' offensive lineman Alex Lewis helped set up Michael Badgley's 28-yard field goal as the Hurricanes held on.

Trailing 33-10 with a little more than 8 1/2 minutes remaining in regulation, quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. led NU on a frantic rally, TD passes of 10 yards to Alonzo Moore, 21 yards to Brandon Reilly and 8 yards Stanley Morgan and a two-point conversion pass to Jordan Westerkamp to tie the score at 33-33 with 33 seconds left in regulation. Armstrong finished 21 of 45 passing for 309 yards and four TDs and accounted for 358 yards of total offense, but was intercepted three times as the Huskers fell to 8-2 all-time in OT contests. Safety Nate Gerry led Nebraska's defense with nine total tackles. Defensive end Freedom Akinmoladum added six tackles, including a sack. With the loss, NU's record fell to 1-2 for the first time since the 1981 season. It marked the first time the Huskers had played a regular-season game in Florida since a 1951 loss to the Hurricanes, who evened the all-time series with NU 6-6.

Game 4
Nebraska 36, So. Miss 28
Sept. 26, 2015 in Lincoln, Neb.

Drew Brown had a busy day against Southern Miss.

JIMMITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Nebraska built a 29-7 third-quarter lead and survived a 21-point fourth-quarter rally by Southern Miss to record a homecoming victory at Memorial Stadium.

Cornhuskers' place-kicker Drew Brown converted five first-half field goals, tying a NCAA record for field goals in a half with Dale Klein of Nebraska in 1985 at Missouri and Dat Ly of New Mexico State in 1988 at Kansas. Brown was 5 of 7 on field goals for the day.

Tommy Armstrong Jr. was 23 of 35 passing for 368 yards and two TDs to lead Nebraska's offense to a 610-yard total output. Two Huskers topped the 100-yard mark in receiving as Jordan Westerkamp had 11 catches for 118 yards and a TD and Brandon Reilly had three receptions for 112 yards.

I-back Terrell Newby led NU with 79 yards rushing, but the buzz centered around the return of the fullback to the Huskers' rushing attack as Andy Janovich carried five times for 68 yards. Janovich, who also had a 53-yard pass reception, had runs of 28 and 25 yards – the longest by a Nebraska fullback since Steve Kriewald's 48-yard run at Oklahoma in 2004. Linebacker Chris Weber recorded a team-high 12 tackles for Nebraska, which was tough against the run for a second consecutive game at home. The Blackshirts permitted just 11 yards on the ground against the Golden Eagles.

Game 5
Illinois 14, Nebraska 13
Oct. 3, 2015 in Champaign, Ill.

It takes three Fighting Illini defenders to bring Andy Janovich down.

ANDREW BARRY/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Wes Lunt's 1-yard TD pass to Geronimo Allison with 10 seconds remaining and the ensuing point-after kick by Taylor Zalewski lifted Illinois to a come-from-behind victory over Nebraska in its Big Ten Conference opener. It was the third late-game loss of the season for the Huskers, who previously fell in its season opener against BYU on the game's final play and later suffered an overtime loss at Miami. The setback left Nebraska, which led 13-0 after three quarters, with its worst start since 1959 at 2-3. NU had a golden opportunity to close out the game – or at least make things much more difficult for Illinois. After the Fighting Illini had used all their timeouts, the Huskers had a third-and-7 play at the Illinois 30-yard line, but quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. rolled to his right, was pressured and threw an incomplete pass, stopping the clock with 55 seconds left. Linebacker Chris Weber starred for NU's defense, recording a career-high 17 tackles, including three tackles for loss. Teammate Dedrick Young added 11 tackles, while Maliek Collins had nine tackles, including 1 1/2 sacks.

Devine Ozigbo led NU's offense with 70 yards rushing on seven attempts, including a 19-yard TD run in the second quarter. Armstrong struggled in cold and windy conditions, completing 10 of 31 pass attempts for 105 yards with one interception.

Game 6
Wisconsin 23, Nebraska 21
Oct. 10, 2015 in Lincoln, Neb.

Alonzo Moore goes up to make a touchdown catch against Wisconsin.

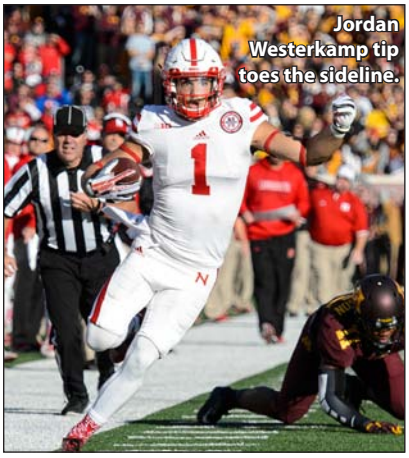
MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Late-game heartbreak found Nebraska yet again as Rafael Gaglianone's 46-yard field goal with four seconds to play lifted Wisconsin to the victory. The Cornhuskers took a 21-20 lead on fullback Andy Janovich's 55-yard TD run with 3:38 to play, but NU couldn't hold on.

The game-winning kick was redemption for Gaglianone, who had missed a 39-yard attempt off the right upright with 1:26 remaining. The Badgers outgained Nebraska 469-325 in total offense as the Huskers struggled with the passing game for the second consecutive contest. Quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. was just 11 of 28 through the air with a 41-yard scoring pass to wide receiver Alonzo Moore to put NU ahead 14-7 at halftime.

Janovich (59 yards), Terrell Newby (59 yards) and Armstrong (50 yards) led Nebraska's rushing attack, which averaged 5.3 yards per carry. Janovich's 55-yard TD run was the longest by a Nebraska fullback since Tom Rathman's 84-yarder against Colorado in 1985. Byerson Cockrell led Nebraska's defense with 10 tackles, while defensive back Joshua Kalu and linebacker Marcus Newby had four pass breakups apiece. Punter Sam Foltz had a big day for the Huskers, averaging 43.8 yards on nine punts, including a long of 57 yards. Foltz killed two punts inside the Wisconsin 20. The loss dropped Nebraska to 2-4 on the season with the four losses coming by a total of 11 points.

Game 7
Nebraska 48, Minneapolis 25
Oct. 17, 2015 in Minneapolis, Minn.


Jordan Westerkamp tip toes the sideline.

JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

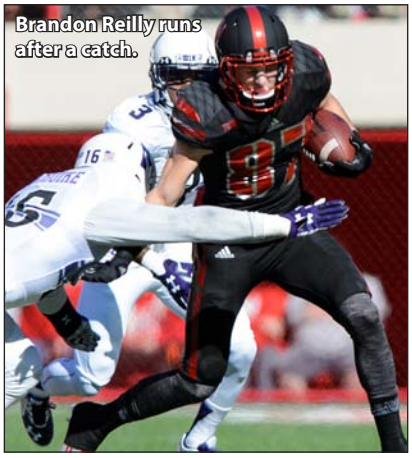
Coming off consecutive last-second losses against Illinois and Wisconsin to open Big Ten Conference play, Nebraska finally put it all together in a road victory at Minnesota. A crowd of 54,062 at TCF Bank Stadium saw the hard-luck Huskers make enough plays down the stretch to snap a two-game losing streak against the Gophers.

Nebraska led 38-14 on quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr.'s 14-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver De'Mornay Pierson-El with 14:21 to play when things suddenly got interesting again. Quarterback Mitch Leidner's 1-yard TD run and a two-point conversion, followed by Ryan Santoso's 39-yard field goal, pulled the Gophers to within 38-25 with 6:49 remaining.

But I-back Terrell Newby recovered an onside kick and Armstrong converted a key third-down play with a 27-yard pass to wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp to help Nebraska answer with a 41-yard field goal by Drew Brown for a 41-25 lead with 3:06 left. Five plays later, Huskers' cornerback Joshua Kalu intercepted a Leidner pass, returned it 41 yards for a TD and the Huskers could finally relax.

Nebraska gained early confidence when Newby broke free on the Huskers' third play from scrimmage for a career-long 69-yard TD run, knotting the score at 7-7 with 8:52 left in the first quarter. NU went on to gain 464 total yards, including 203 yards rushing, as Newby finished with 116 yards and two TDs on the ground.

Game 8
Northwestern 30, Nebraska 28
Oct. 24, 2015 in Lincoln, Neb.


Brandon Reilly runs after a catch.

MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Nebraska suffered its fifth loss of the season by five or fewer points as Northwestern escaped with a two-point victory at Memorial Stadium.

In a game that featured a reunion of the Cornhuskers' 1995 national championship, NU wore alternate uniforms, but couldn't escape another disappointing setback.

Nebraska cut its deficit to 30-28 on Tommy Armstrong Jr.'s 3-yard TD run with 4:23 to play, but Armstrong's two-point conversion pass attempt failed. Northwestern was then able to pick up three key first downs and burn the final 4:18 off the clock to notch its second win at Lincoln since 2011.

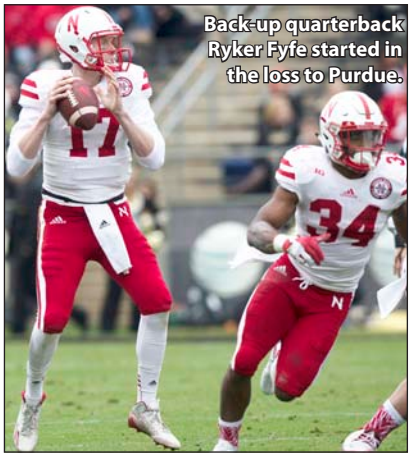
Armstrong was 24 of 48 passing for 291 yards and a TD, but also threw an interception that was returned 72 yards by Northwestern's Nick VanHoose for a score.

Wide Receiver Jordan Westerkamp had five receptions for 92 yards to become the ninth player in program history with more than 100 career catches and I-back Terrell Newby rushed for 52 yards to lead Nebraska's offense.

Nebraska's defense allowed a season-low 177 passing yards, but was hurt by quarterback scrambles as Clayton Thorson rushed for 126 yards and a TD, including a 68-yard run.

Linebacker Josh Banderas led the Blackshirts with 10 total tackles, while Sam Foltz averaged 50.7 yards on six punts, including three punts that traveled 50 yards or more with a long of 63.

Game 9
Purdue 55, Nebraska 45
Oct. 31, 2015 in West Lafayette, Ind.


Back-up quarterback Ryker Fyfe started in the loss to Purdue.

JAKE CRANDALL/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Nebraska committed five turnovers and had no answer for quarterback David Blough as the Boilermakers hit the Cornhuskers with a 21-0 third-quarter scoring spree on its way to winning a battle to avoid the Big Ten's West Division cellar.

It marked the first conference home victory for third-year Purdue head coach Darrell Hazell.

The loss left the Cornhuskers 3-6 overall and 1-4 in the Big Ten.

After losing five games by a combined 13 points previously, Nebraska trailed 42-16 with 2:34 remaining in the third before producing 29 fourth-quarter points to close the gap.

Purdue (2-6, 1-3 Big Ten) was outgained 484-457 in total offense, but made a living turning Nebraska's miscues into points. Of the five takeaways, the Boilermakers converted four into touchdowns. Cornerback Anthony Brown finished with three interceptions for Purdue, which took advantage of four short-field opportunities after Nebraska turnovers. On their TD drives after Husker turnovers, the Boilermakers took possession at the NU 16-, 22, 19 and 6-yard line, respectively.

With starting quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. sidelined by a turf-toe injury, Ryker Fyfe was called on to make his first collegiate start in a road game for Nebraska. The junior was 29 of 48 through the air for 407 yards, but was also intercepted four times and the Huskers also lost a fumble on an errant center snap.

Game 10
Nebraska 39, Mich. State 38
Nov. 7, 2015 in Lincoln, Neb.

Alex Gordon celebrates after the Michigan State game.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Nebraska highlighted its season with a miraculous come-from-behind victory over previously unbeaten Michigan State. Trailing 38-26, the Cornhuskers scored two TDs in the final 1:46 to give the Spartans, who would eventually win the Big Ten championship game and earn a spot in the four-team college football playoff, their only loss of the regular season.

Nebraska trailed 38-33 with 55 seconds to play, but drove 91 yards on four plays, pulling ahead on Tommy Armstrong Jr.'s 30-yard TD pass to Brandon Reilly with 38 seconds left. The margin stayed at one point as the Huskers' two-point conversion attempt failed.

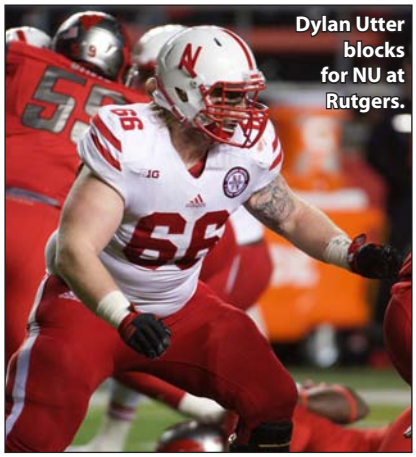
The game-winning score didn't come without controversy as Reilly had stepped out of bounds before catching the go-head TD pass.

However, officials ruled that the Nebraska wide receiver had been forced out of bounds by a Spartans' defender and was able to legally come back inbounds and make the catch.

Armstrong passed for 320 yards and two TDs, completing 19 of 33 attempts with two interceptions. Westerkamp finished with nine receptions for 143 yards and a TD and I-back Imani Cross carried 18 times for 98 yards and a TD as the Huskers outgained Michigan State 499-491 in total offense.

Safety Nate Gerry recorded a team-high 14 tackles for Nebraska, including nine solo stops. Linebacker Josh Banderas added 10 tackles and Jonathan Rose intercepted a pass.

Game 11
Nebraska 31, Rutgers 14
Nov. 21, 2013 in Piscataway, N.J.


Dylan Utter blocks for NU at Rutgers.

GARRETT EWALD/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Nebraska built a 21-0 first-half lead and carried on for a road victory over Rutgers. Making their first trip to play the Scarlet Knights as Big Ten Conference opponents, the Cornhuskers won consecutive games for only time during the 2015 season.

The Blackshirts defense kept Rutgers under wraps most of the way, limiting the Scarlet Knights to 259 yards of total offense, including 89 net yards rushing. Defensive end Greg McMullen had two sacks to lead Nebraska's six-sack assault on quarterback Chris Laviano, while safety Nate Gerry had a team-high eight tackles to go with an interception. Chris Jones also had a pick for the Huskers.

The Huskers set the tone early, scoring on their opening possession on a 32-yard run by Cethan Carter. It was the first career carry for Carter and the first rushing TD by a Nebraska tight end since at least 1971. Carter later had an 11-yard TD reception.

Tommy Armstrong Jr. had an up-and-down day, completing 14 of 21 pass attempts for 188 yards and three TDs, but was also intercepted three times.

I-back Imani Cross carried 20 times for 90 yards to lead Nebraska's ground attack.

NU place-kicker Drew Brown converted a 44-yard field-goal attempt early in the fourth quarter. It marked Brown's eighth consecutive field goal with all of them coming from 40 yards or longer.

Game 12
Iowa 28, Nebraska 20
Nov. 27, 2015 in Lincoln, Neb.

Ryne Reeves is greeted by Mike Riley.

JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

The Husker's attempt to upset a second highly ranked opponent at Memorial Stadium came up short as Iowa completed its first undefeated regular season since 1922 with a victory over the Cornhuskers. The Hawkeyes improved to 12-0 with the win, clinching a spot in the Big Ten title game.

The Blackshirts defense performed admirably, limiting Iowa quarterback CJ Beathard to a 9-of-16 passing performance for 97 yards and a TD. The Hawkeyes were also 0-for-9 on third-down conversions.

Meanwhile, Nebraska's offense outgained Iowa 433-250. The Huskers also enjoyed a 36:06-23:54 advantage in time of possession.

However, the difference was turnovers and Iowa running back Jordan Canzeri, who rushed 17 times for 140 yards and two TDs. Iowa intercepted Nebraska quarterback Tommy Armstrong a career-high four times, including a 4-yard pick-six by Parker Hesse, giving the Hawkeyes a 14-7 lead with 6:38 left in the second quarter. Armstrong finished 25 of 45 passing for 296 yards, completing passes to nine different receivers.

I-back Imani Cross led the Huskers in rushing with 55 yards and two TDs on 19 attempts.

The Iowa win gave a victory to the road team for the fourth consecutive meeting in the series. Nebraska, which is 3-2 against the Hawkeyes since joining the Big Ten, posted the only win by a home team in the NU-Hawkeyes Big Ten series, winning in Lincoln in 2011.

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2015-16 NEBRASKA MEN'S BASKETBALL

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown (Prev School)
0	Tai Webster	G	6-4	196	Jr.	Auckland, New Zealand
1	Anton Gill	G	6-3	191	Jr.	Raleigh, North Carolina
3	Andrew White III	G	6-7	216	Jr.	Richmond, Virginia
4	Johnny Trueblood	G	6-4	195	Fr.	Omaha, Nebraska
5	Glynn Watson Jr.	G	6-0	165	Fr.	Bellwood, Illinois
10	Jack McVeigh	F	6-8	210	Fr.	Cabarita Beach, NSW, Australia
11	Bakari Evelyn	G	6-2	178	Fr.	Detroit, Michigan
12	Michael Jacobson	F	6-8	222	Fr.	Waukee, Iowa
15	Malcolm Laws	G	6-1	190	So.	Orlando, Florida
20	Tanner Borchardt	F	6-8	275	Fr.	Gothenburg, Nebraska
23	Nick Fuller	F	6-7	204	So.	Sun Prairie, Wisconsin
24	Jake Hammond	F	6-10	235	So.	Comanche, Oklahoma
30	Ed Morrow	F	6-7	225	Fr.	Chicago, Illinois
31	Shavon Shields	F	6-7	225	Sr.	Olathe, Kansas
32	Benny Parker	G	5-9	175	Sr.	Kansas City, Kansas

Head Coach - Tim Miles; Assistant Coaches - Phil Beckner, Kenya Hunter, Jim Molinari

2015-16 NEBRASKA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown (Prev School)
4	Kyndal Clark	G	5-7	Sr.	Webb City, Missouri
5	Natalie Romeo	G	5-7	So.	Martinez, California
11	Esther Ramacieri	G	5-8	Jr.	Repentigny, Quebec, Canada
12	Emily Wood	G	5-5	So.	Salina, Kansas
22	Allie Havers	C	6-5	Jr.	Mattawan, Michigan
24	Maddie Simon	F	6-2	Fr.	Lincoln, Nebraska
31	Anya Kalenta	F	6-3	Sr.	Minsk, Belarus
32	Jessica Shepherd	F	6-4	Fr.	Fremont, Nebraska
33	Rachel Theriot	G	6-0	Sr.	Middleburg Heights, Ohio
34	Jasmine Cincore	G	5-10	So.	Arlington, Tennessee
43	Rachel Blackburn	F	6-3	Fr.	Leavenworth, Kansas
50	Darrien Washington	F	6-2	RFr.	Oakland, California
52	Alicia Ostrander	F	6-3	Sr.	Gordon, Nebraska

Head Coach - Connie Yori; Assistant Coaches - Britney Brown, Ashley Ford, Amy Stephens

2015-16 Men's Basketball Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time
Nov. 14	Miss Valley St	W, 97-51
Nov. 17	at Villanova	L, 87-63
Nov. 19	Delaware State	W, 75-60
Nov. 22	SE Louisiana	W, 92-65
Nov. 24	AR-Pine Bluff	W, 67-44
Nov. 27	Cincinnati	L, 65-61
Nov. 28	Tennessee	W, 82-71
Dec. 1	Miami (FL)	L, 77-72 OT
Dec. 5	Abi. Christian	W, 73-63
Dec. 9	at Creighton	L, 83-67
Dec. 13	Rhode Island	W, 70-67
Dec. 20	Samford	L, 69-58
Dec. 22	PV A&M	W, 81-50
Dec. 30	Northwestern	L, 81-72
Jan. 2	Indiana	L, 79-69
Jan. 5	at Iowa	L, 77-66
Jan. 9	at Rutgers	5 p.m.
Jan. 12	Minnesota	9 p.m.
Jan. 16	at Illinois	2:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	at Mich. State	6:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	Michigan	2 p.m.
Jan. 30	at Purdue	4:30 p.m.
Feb. 3	Maryland	8:30 p.m.
Feb. 6	Rutgers	2 p.m.
Feb. 10	at Wisconsin	7 p.m.
Feb. 13	Penn State	6 p.m.
Feb. 17	at Indiana	8:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	Ohio State	TBD
Feb. 25	at Penn State	7 p.m.
Mar. 1	Purdue	8 p.m.
Mar. 6	at Northwestern	2 p.m.

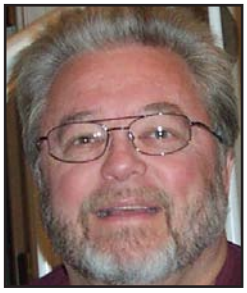
Clockwise from above: Jack McVeigh drives to the hoop against Prairie View A&M. Michael Jacobson goes up for the opening tip off against the Panthers. Tai Webster hangs in the air.

Photos by Reggie Ryder/Huskers Illustrated

Clockwise from above: Jessica Shepard puts up two of her freshman school-record 35 points against Northern Arizona. She is leading the Huskers with a 19.5 point per game average. Natalie Romeo is averaging 15.5 points per game this season. Rachel Theriot is averaging 12.7 points and 7 assists per game so far this season.

2015-16 Women's Basketball Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time
Nov. 14	Ark.-Pine Bluff	W 96-46
Nov. 16	North Florida	W, 91-46
Nov. 21	N.C. Central	W, 88-47
Nov. 23	Southern	W, 89-38
Nov. 28	at UConn	L, 88-46
Dec. 3	N.C. State	W, 88-67
Dec. 6	Creighton	W, 65-63
Dec. 8	Evansville	W, 85-40
Dec. 12	at California	L, 87-80 OT
Dec. 19	N. Arizona	W, 90-67
Dec. 21	Arkansas State	W, 79-71
Dec. 31	Iowa	L, 74-68
Jan. 3	at Northwestern	L, 85-62
Jan. 7	at Maryland	6 p.m.
Jan. 10	Illinois	2 p.m.
Jan. 13	at Penn State	6 p.m.
Jan. 16	Rutgers	5:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	at Purdue	6 p.m.
Jan. 24	at Michigan	1 p.m.
Jan. 27	Wisconsin	7 p.m.
Jan. 30	at Rutgers	1 p.m.
Feb. 2	Penn State	7 p.m.
Feb. 7	at Indiana	1 p.m.
Feb. 11	at Minneapolis	7 p.m.
Feb. 14	Michigan State	3 p.m.
Feb. 18	at Ohio State	5 p.m.
Feb. 20 or 21	Purdue	TBA
Feb. 24	Indiana	7 p.m.
Feb. 28	Northwestern	TBA
Mar. 2-6	Big Ten Tourney	
Mar. 19-22	NCAA 1st & 2nd Rds	



A Stroll Down Rasmussen Road With

Bobby Reynolds

Football Player 1950-52

Column by Butch Rasmussen

Sure, everybody knows Bobby Reynolds was a great player for Nebraska but do they really realize how great?

Summer 1949. The kid from Grand Island pulls out of town on to highway 34 and heads toward Lincoln, Nebraska where he plans to play football for the Nebraska Cornhuskers. He's got a year to wait and learn because in those days freshmen couldn't play varsity football but down the road who knew he was to become a college football legend.

All Reynolds had to do was step on the field as a sophomore to make a statement regarding his athletic abilities. Nebraska hadn't had a winning season for 10 years until Reynolds guided them to a 6-2-1 season his first year on the Memorial Stadium turf.

Reynolds was a first team All-America his first season on the field for the Huskers and is best remembered for a touchdown run against Missouri which went from sideline to sideline and back again before crossing the goal line. He got credit for a 33 yard touchdown run but some say he ran well over 100 yards and I suppose they had the film to prove it..

Reynolds playing time was limited after that fabulous sophomore season in 1950 but that season defined Bobbie Reynolds as no other could. School single season rushing records of over 1,300 yards and 22 touchdowns stood for 30 years and were just part of that sophomore legacy. Mike Rozier took down both of those records in 1983.

With his playing time limited during his final 2 seasons due to injury, Reynolds managed to set a career scoring record of 211 points which stood for 22 years and a record 2,196 rushing yards which held up for 21 years. For 60 years many have wondered what that kid from Grand Island High School could have done if he'd been healthy his final two seasons.

Oklahoma great, the late Billy Vessels, 1952 Heisman Trophy winner for the Sooners said they'd never seen anybody as exciting as Bobby. "He was probably as talented a player as ever played the game" , Vessels said.

Just as his football career was cut short, so was his life cut short. Reynolds died in Lincoln in 1985 at the age of 54.

About 3 years ago I wrote a newspaper column on Reynolds for the *North Platte Telegraph* and if you think that small town newspaper just stays around North Platte you can try that thought again. And if you think Husker fans forget their heros, that never happens either.

The piece in the Telegraph brought comments from children of the 1940s and 50s who remembered Reynolds well. Comments surfaced from California, Kansas, Arizona, Washington state, Missouri and Washington DC. Small town North Platte Telegraph - I don't think so.

Among them, this note from Bobby's son, Rick Reynolds from Lee's Summit, Missouri "I want to thank you for the article on Bobby Reynolds, he was a great athlete, an even better person and an outstanding father. I would know this because he was my father. One of the most sincere regrets I have is that my 3 children never had a opportunity to get to know their grandfather."

"My youngest, Riley, played baseball in college at Vanderbilt and he never got to know that perspective until he and his Vanderbilt team qualified for the college world series in 2011. I say that because during the world series, once it was known that Bobby Reynolds was his grandfather he received numerous messages at his hotel to call people he didn't know just to tell him how they knew his grandfather".

"One incident that stood out to me was after a game an older gentleman came up to Riley, tapped him on his shoulder and asked him if Bobby Reynolds was his grandfather. Riley said yes he was, the gentleman then made a fist and tapped his heart and with his eyes swelling up told him how much he had meant to him growing up". Thanks again for the article they always bring back great memories along with sadness that he is gone even after all these years".

All who responded to the column were intrigued by the recollection in their minds from long ago of the masterful manipulation of a football by one of Nebraska's great former athletes. All of them dusted off memories of Reynolds exploits on the Memorial Stadium turf in Lincoln as they remembered them from more than 60 years ago.

Kent Cook from San Diego wrote: "Bobby was my first boyhood idol. What you didn't mention in your article was the NCAA records he set in 1950. I know he set the NCAA record for points scored in a season (yes, 157 - BR). He set the NCAA record for average points scored per game in a single season, 17.4."

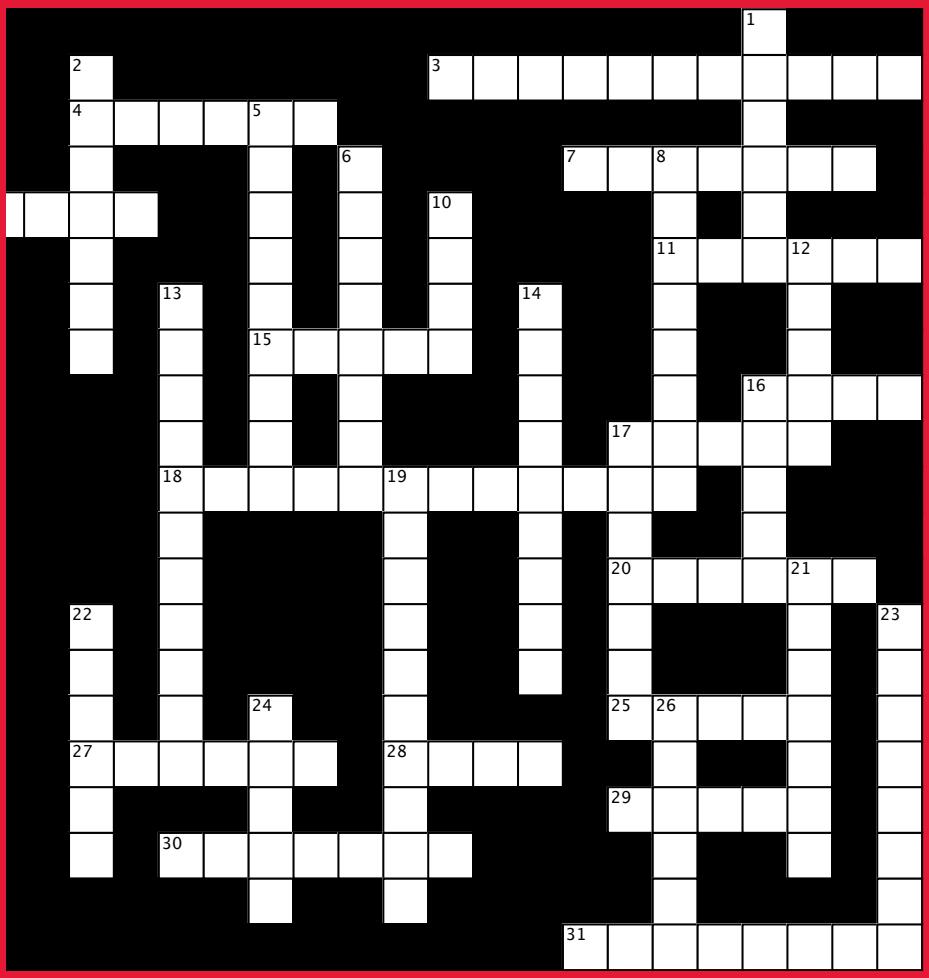
Then came Dr. Wendell Johnson from Richland Washington: "I just wanted to thank you for the great article on Bobby Reynolds. I was in the stands on that day he made the unbelievable run against Missouri and still find it hard to believe."

Ken Softley from Topeka, Kansas followed with: "I grew up in Kearney, where we lived a couple of blocks east of the Kearney State stadium. In junior high, I didn't have the pocket change for a student ticket, so would stand outside the cyclone fence at the south end of the stadium. I recall Reynolds breaking a QB sneak and bringing it 65 yards straight at me. Distressing for a Bearcat fan, but unforgettable."

And Don Weber from Tucson, Arizona: "I picked up your column through Husker Max which I follow all of the time. I was a freshman at Nebraska when Bobby was a sophomore. I believe that he was the greatest all around athlete I have ever seen."

Jerry Josties from the Washington DC area added his thoughts: "(Other than the famous Missouri scamper) There was another memorable run against Oklahoma in which he magically zipped in between two Oklahoma defenders who were left in each other's arms while Bobby continued on for a TD."

HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

3. Leader in sacks in 2015
4. Leading rusher in Foster Farms Bowl
7. Ex-Husker linebacker now with Washington Redskins
9. Intercepted pass in Foster Farms Bowl
11. Receiver who shared Newcomer-of-the-Year Award
15. Leading rusher in 2015
16. Linebackers coach
17. Leading tackler in 2015
18. Opponent in 2016 Big Ten opener
20. Ex-Husker receiver now with New York Jets
25. Linebacker who shared Newcomer-of-the-Year Award
27. Cletus Fischer Native Son Award winner
28. Leading tackler in Foster Farms Bowl
29. Walk-on of the Year Award winner
30. Mike Riley's alma mater
31. Tom Novak Trophy winner

DOWN

1. Tight end who shared Most Improved Player Award
2. Junior defensive lineman who declared for NFL Draft
5. Honorary inductee in Nebraska Hall of Fame 2015 class
6. Guy Chamberlin Trophy winner
8. Defensive lineman who shared Husker Pride Award
10. 2018 non-conference opponent
12. Ejected from Foster Farms Bowl
13. Opponent in 2016 opener
14. Foster Farms Bowl Most Outstanding Offensive Player
16. Leading scorer in 2015
17. Sam Foltz's hometown
19. Leading receiver in 2015
21. 1994 Outland Trophy winner
22. Offensive lineman who shared Husker Pride Award
23. Lifter of the Year
24. Devine Ozigbo's home state
26. 2017 non-conference opponent

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